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The Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, England

RUTH AND NAOMI

From a painting by Philip H. Calderon

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HEROES AND HEROINES

VOLUME THREE

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TO

THE ONCOMING GENERATION

AND TO ALL WHO WOULD HAVE A NEW

VISION OF THE BEAUTY AND

THE POWER OF THE

MESSAGE OF

LIFE

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PREFACE

IN this volume are to be found the accounts which the Hebrew people have handed down of the beginnings of things. How God in his providence made a progressive selection from the races and families of the earth, until he narrowed his choice to the one nation through which he was to give the great revelation of himself to the world, is the epic-story told in "The Beginnings."

Some of the most fascinating personal narratives in the Bible, brief lives of men and women who have meant much to the world because of the lessons they taught, are also included in this volume. The loyalty of Ruth, the mingled strength and weakness of Samson, the unwilling service of Jonah, are proverbial alike in literature and in everyday speech.

The accomplishments and exploits of those leaders who guided and steadied the Jewish people from the time of their exile, through their captivity, and from the return to Palestine on to the Roman period, are recorded here also. None of these men, perhaps, was so great as Abraham or David or Elijah, but the firm and faithful Nehemiah is a figure of heroic stature. Judas Maccabeus, too, whose history is related in the First Book of the Maccabees, was the man for his time, and one whom the Jewish race has never forgotten.

This volume concludes with some interesting scenes from the life of the Hebrew people. Thus we learn how they lived, thought, felt, and worshiped, from the early times of the Judges to the century before the coming of Christ.

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THE BEGINNINGS

World-old and lovely stories
I heard and cherished well,
When summer evening glories
About the doorstep fell;
When eager eyes would glisten,
Each little heart aglow,
As down we bent to listen
To words writ long ago.

—*Heine*

THE CREATION OF ADAM

From a painting by Michelangelo

THE CREATION OF ADAM

From a painting by Michelangelo

The fourth panel in the series of nine which constitutes the central portion of the frescoes in the Sistine Chapel is the Creation of Adam. It is considered to be the masterpiece in this masterly series. In it the artist's genius reaches high-water mark. This superb creature on a hilltop, just coming alive, has no rival in the whole range of painting.

Propped up by one arm, simply because the elbow happened by good luck to fall vertically beneath the shoulder; that knee raised only because the leg happened to be poised (it might fall either way at any moment); the body bent by its own weight; the heavy head and neck sunken within the shoulders; the lifeless hand; the childlike face where a response to the divine is just beginning to manifest itself; no other painter ever charged a human figure with such a burden of meaning.

The figure of the Creator is no less wonderful. Perfectly at rest, yet tense with activity, it rides amid its attendants, supported by them, yet supporting all. Compare the foot with that of Adam. How living it is! Compare the Creator's two hands. That upon the shoulder of the cherub is doing something, but its energy is as nothing compared with that outstretched to communicate the electric thrill of life to the newly created body. Compare this life-giving hand with Adam's hand. Notice the difference between the two index fingers; between the two thumbs; between the other fingers; between the two wrists. Here are the two most expressive hands in the world within an inch of each other.

But there is one element in this picture seldom, if ever, noticed; namely, the Spirit of the Creator sent forth in advance to energize the inert body. Michelangelo, a keen thinker and a reverent and thorough student of the Scriptures, knew that before the human spirit could even reach out a hand toward God, the breath of the Almighty must already have given it life. Therefore in this wonderful panel the Almighty projects himself as a vast cloud close to the recumbent body. The Creator's head is repeated line for line in this cloudy shape, even to the eye and the flowing beard; the open mouth is opposite Adam's head, "breathing into his nostrils" the breath of life.

But Michelangelo went further yet. God's foreknowledge had been affirmed by the church fathers for a thousand years. "With God," they said, "knowing and willing are one." Already the helpmeet for Adam existed in the knowledge and purpose of the Creator. Therefore, in this picture, Eve already exists, next to the heart of God, the most beautiful of all the heavenly attendants, the most interested of all those who were present "when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

"THE LORD GOD PLANTED A GARDEN"

The Lord God planted a garden
In the first white days of the world;
And set there an angel warden,
In garments of light unfurled.

So near to the peace of Heaven,
That the hawk might nest with the wren;
For there in the cool of the even
God walked with the first of men.

And I dream that these garden closes,
With their shade and their sun-flecked sod,
And their lilies and bowers of roses,
Were laid by the hand of God.

The kiss of the sun for pardon,
The song of the birds for mirth—
One is nearer God's heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on earth.

—*Dorothy Gurney*

MY GARDEN

A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Ferned grot—
The veriest school
Of peace; and yet the fool
Contends that God is not—
Not God! in gardens! when the eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign;
'Tis very sure God walks in mine.

—*T. E. Brown*

THE BEGINNINGS

HOW HUMAN LIFE BEGAN

Foreword

THESE are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. And no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet sprung up; for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

The First Man

Then the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden[1]; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life[2] also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became four heads. The name of the first is Pishon: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that traverseth the whole land of Ethiopia [Cush]. And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

EVE

From a painting by Sodoma

And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded him, saying, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

The First Woman

And the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him."

And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found a help meet for him.

Then the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her to the man. And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called, 'Woman,' because she was taken out of man."

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall be one flesh.[3]

PARADISE

Once in a dream I saw the flowers
    That bud and bloom in Paradise.
    More fair they are than waking eyes
Have seen in all this world of ours;
And faint the perfume-bearing rose,
    And faint the lily on its stem,
And faint the perfect violet,
    Compared with them.

ADAM

From a painting by Raphael

I heard the songs of Paradise.
    Each bird sat singing in its place
    A tender song so full of grace
It soared like incense to the skies.
Each bird sat singing to its mate
    Soft-cooing notes among the trees:
The nightingale herself were cold
    To such as these.

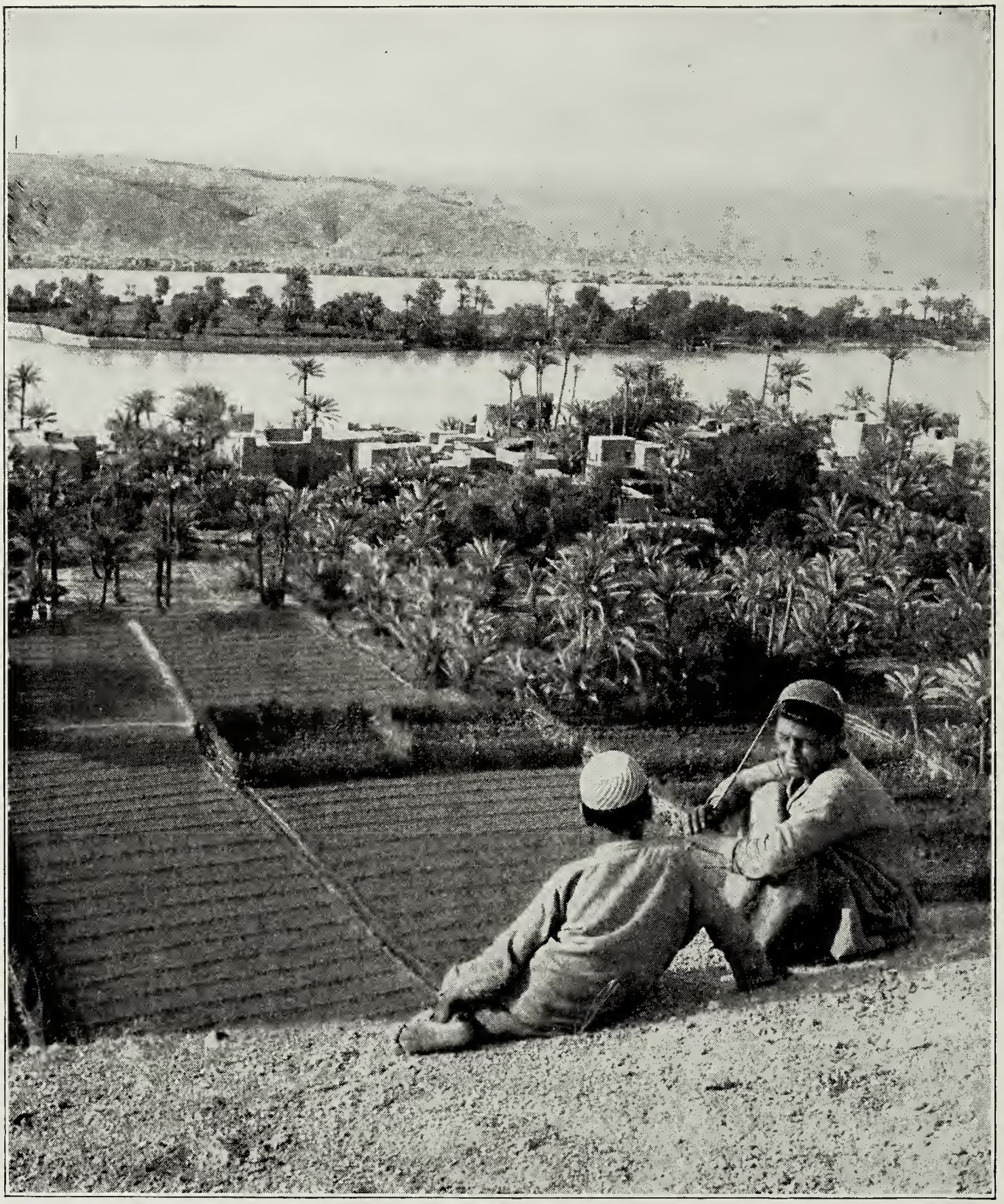
I saw the fourfold River flow,
    And deep it was, with golden sand;
    It flowed between a mossy land
With murmured music grave and low.
It hath refreshment for all thirst,
    For fainting spirit strength and rest;
Earth holds not such a draught as this
    From east to west.

The Tree of Life stood budding there,
    Abundant with its twelvefold fruits;
    Eternal sap sustains its roots,
Its shadowing branches fill the air.
Its leaves are healing for the world;
    Its fruit the hungry world can feed,
Sweeter than honey to the taste,
    And balm indeed.

I saw the Gate called Beautiful;
    And looked, but scarce could look within.
    I saw the golden streets begin,
And outskirts of the glassy pool.
O harps, O crowns of plenteous stars,
    O green palm branches, many-leaved—
Eye hath not seen, nor ear hath heard,
    Nor heart conceived!

I hope to see these things again,
    But not as once in dreams by night;
    To see them with my very sight,
And touch and handle and attain;
To have all Heaven beneath my feet
    For narrow way that once they trod;
To have my part with all the saints,
    And with my God.

—*Christina G. Rossetti*



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THE EUPHRATES AND THE TRADITIONAL GARDEN OF EDEN

According to the Bible account, four rivers issued from Eden. Two of these have been identified as the Tigris and the Euphrates; the other two are thought by some scholars to be the Nile and the Indus. The Armenians claim that the Garden of Eden is to be found in their country, in which both the Tigris and the Euphrates originate, but the dwellers in Mesopotamia are quite certain that Eden lay in their fertile valley, where great rivers bring abundant life to the soil and where the hot sun causes the earth to yield all manner of fruits. There are countless places that may have been Eden; for the word "Paradise" is none other than a transliteration of a Persian word which means "a park of trees." Such a "Paradise" one sees in this picture.

HOW SIN CAME INTO THE WORLD

Adam and Eve Eat of the Forbidden Tree

And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Yea, hath God said, 'Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?'"

And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, 'Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.'"

But the serpent said to the woman, "Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Now when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and ate, and gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

They Fear to Meet God

Then the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

And the Lord God called to Adam, and said to him, "Where art thou?"

And he said, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself."

Then he said, "Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?"

And the man said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate."

Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that thou hast done?"

And the woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I ate."

God Declares the Consequences of Sin

And the Lord God said to the serpent: "Because thou hast done this,

"Thou art cursed above all cattle,
And above every beast of the field;
Upon thy belly shalt thou go,
And dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:
And I will put enmity between thee and the woman,
And between thy offspring and her offspring;
It shall bruise thy head,
And thou shalt bruise his heel."

And to Adam he said: "Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, 'Thou shalt not eat of it';

"Cursed is the ground for thy sake;
In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;
Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee;
And thou shalt eat the herb of the field;
In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,
Till thou return to the ground,
For out of it wast thou taken:
For dust thou art,
And unto dust shalt thou return."

For Adam also and for his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

And the Lord God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil": and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever,

THE ANGEL WITH THE FLAMING SWORD

From a painting by E. H. Blashfield

the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

In either hand the hastening angel caught
Our lingering parents, and to the eastern gate
Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
To the subjected plain; then disappeared.
They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate
With dreadful faces thronged, and fiery arms:
Some natural tears they dropped, but wiped them soon:
The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide;
They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow
Through Eden took their solitary way.

—*From "Paradise Lost," by Milton*

THE BEGINNING OF FAMILY LIFE

Now Adam called his wife's name Eve [Life]; because she was the mother of all living.

And Eve became the mother of Cain [Gotten], and said, "I have gotten a man from the Lord." And she became the mother of his brother Abel [Breath]. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect to Abel and to his offering: but to Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said to Cain:

"Why art thou angry?
And why is thy countenance fallen?

THE FIRST DEATH

From a sculpture by Louis Ernest Barrias

If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?
But if thou doest not well, sin croucheth at the door:
And to thee shall be its desire;
But do thou rule over it."

And Cain talked with Abel his brother. And it came to pass when they were in the field that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?"

And he said, "I know not: am I my brother's keeper?"

And God said: "What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield to thee its strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the earth."

And Cain said to the Lord: "My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me."[4]

But the Lord said to him:

"Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain,
Vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold."

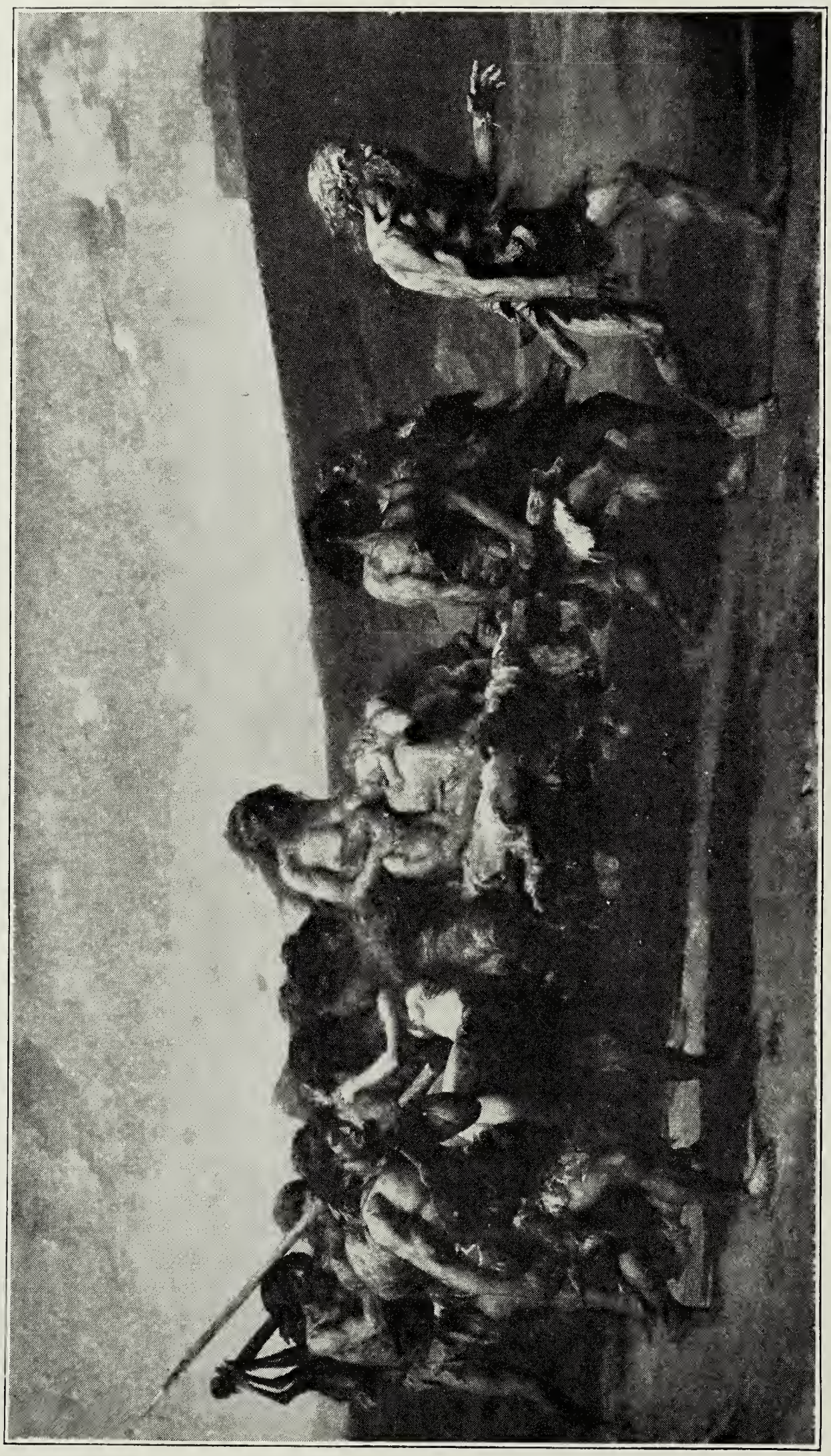
So the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. Thus Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.

And to Adam was born a son, and Eve called his name Seth [He Hath Appointed]: "For God," said she, "hath appointed me another child, instead of Abel, whom Cain slew."

And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enosh. Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord. And to Enosh was born Kenan, and to Kenan was born Mahalalel, and to Mahalalel was born Jared, and to Jared was born Enoch.

CAIN AND ABEL

From a painting by Pierre Cavanel



THE CURSE OF CAIN

From a painting by Fernand Cormon

"When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield to thee its strength; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be in the earth."

And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.

Enoch was the father of Methuselah. And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years; and he died.

CAIN BUILDS THE CITY OF ENOCH

Yearly I till the vale and sow the seed,
But in the furrow rots the golden grain;
My labor is accursed, and all in vain,—
The very earth revolteth at my deed.
God saith no man shall slay me, though I plead
Daily for death. He placed this scarlet stain
Here on my brow, and agonizing pain
Gnaws me beneath it—yet He gives no heed.
Enoch reproacheth me—the guileless lad—
With eyes too like that other's, long since dead;
Remorse engulfs me in her sanguine flood;
I build this City, else I should go mad;
But, as I work, the frowning walls turn red,
And all the towers drip crimson with *his* blood.

—*Lloyd Mifflin*

THE FIRST ARTS AND INDUSTRIES

TUBAL-CAIN

From a painting by James J. Tissot

The personality of Tubal-cain stands for that fateful transition from the age of stone to the age of metals. With the discovery of the use of copper and bronze and iron, civilization in its outward aspects may be said to have begun. The first use to which metals were put may perhaps be indicated by the Song of Lamech, which is a fighter's song of rejoicing in a new-found instrument of vengeance.

Now Cain dwelt east of Eden. And he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch.

And to Enoch was born Irad: and Irad was father of Mehujael, and Mehujael of Methushael, and Methushael of Lamech.

And Lamech took to himself two wives: the name of the one was Adah [Beauty], and the name of the other was Zillah [Shadow].

Adah became the mother of Jabal [Shepherd]; he was the father of such as dwell in tents and have cattle.

And his brother's name was Jubal [Ram's Horn]; he was the father of all such as handle the harp and pipe.

Zillah also became mother of Tubal-cain [Smith]; the forger of every cutting instrument of brass and iron. And the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah [Grace].

And Lamech said to his wives:

"Adah and Zillah, hear my voice;
Ye wives of Lamech, hearken to my speech:
For I have slain a man for wounding me,

And a young man for bruising me.
If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold,
Truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold."

And Lamech became father of a son. And he called his name Noah [Comfort], saying,

"This one shall comfort us,
Concerning our work
And the toil of our hands,
Because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed."

And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy and seven years: and he died.

And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah was the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

TUBAL CAIN

Old Tubal Cain was a man of might
In days when Earth was young;
By the fierce, red light of his furnace bright
The strokes of his hammer rung;
And he lifted his brawny hand
On the iron glowing clear,
Till the sparks rushed out in scarlet showers,
As he fashioned the sword and spear.
And he sang: "Hurrah for my handiwork!
Hurrah for the spear and sword!
Hurrah for the hand that shall wield them well,
For he shall be king and lord!"

To Tubal Cain came many a one,
As he wrought by his roaring fire,
And each one prayed for a strong steel blade
As the crown of his desire:
And he made them weapons sharp and strong,
Till they shouted loud for glee,
And gave him gifts of pearl and gold,
And spoils of the forest free.
And they sang: "Hurrah for Tubal Cain,
Who hath given us strength anew!
Hurrah for the smith, hurrah for the fire,
And hurrah for the metal true!"

But a sudden change came o'er his heart
Ere the setting of the sun,
And Tubal Cain was filled with pain
For the evil he had done;
He saw that men, with rage and hate,
Made war upon their kind,
That the land was red with the blood they shed
In their lust for carnage blind
And he said: "Alas! that ever I made,
Or that skill of mine should plan,
The spear and the sword, for men whose joy
Is to slay their fellow-man!"

And for many a day old Tubal Cain
Sat brooding o'er his woe;
And his hand forebore to smite the ore,
And his furnace smoldered low.
But he rose at last with a cheerful face,
And a bright, courageous eye,
And bared his strong right arm for work,
While the quick flames mounted high.
And he sang: "Hurrah for my handiwork!"
And the red sparks lit the air;
"Not alone for the blade was the bright steel made,"
And he fashioned the first plowshare.

And men, taught wisdom from the past,
In friendship joined their hands,
Hung the sword in the hall, the spear on the wall,
And plowed the willing lands;
And sang: "Hurrah for Tubal Cain!
Our staunch, good friend is he;
And for the plowshare and the plow
To him our praise shall be.
But while oppression lifts its head,
Or a tyrant would be lord,
Though we may thank him for the plow,
We'll not forget the sword!"

—*Charles Mackay*

A NEW BEGINNING FOR MANKIND

Evil Triumphs Everywhere

Now it came to pass when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born to them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all whom they chose.

Then the Lord said, "My spirit shall not always strive with man, because he also is flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

There were giants in the earth in those days, for when the sons of God married the daughters of men, these were their children, the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown.

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. Therefore the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast and the creeping things and the fowls of the air, for it repenteth me that I have made them."[2]

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all life had corrupted itself upon the earth.

The Hope of the Race Rests on One Good Man

Therefore God said to Noah: "The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.[5] Make thyself an ark of cypress wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and thou shalt smear it within and without with pitch. And

BUILDING THE ARK
From a painting by James J. Tissot

this is how thou shalt make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and a cubit in height shalt thou make it; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof. With lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.

"And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. Of fowls

after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind; two of every sort shall come to thee, to keep them alive. And take thou to thee of all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather it to thee; and it shall be for food for thee, and for them."

Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

Then the Lord said to Noah: "Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and the female, but of the beasts that are not clean by twos, the male and the female; and of the fowls also of the air by sevens, male and female, to keep offspring alive upon the face of the earth. For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth."

And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him.

And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth.

The Good Ship Weathers the Storm

Then Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth, there went in two and two to Noah into the ark, male and female, as God commanded Noah. And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth. In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark; they, and every beast after its kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after its kind, and every fowl after its kind, every bird of every sort. And they went in with Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh wherein is the breath of life. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the Lord shut him in.

NOAH
From a painting by James J. Tissot

And the flood was forty days upon the earth, and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it was lifted up above the earth. And the waters prevailed, and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the

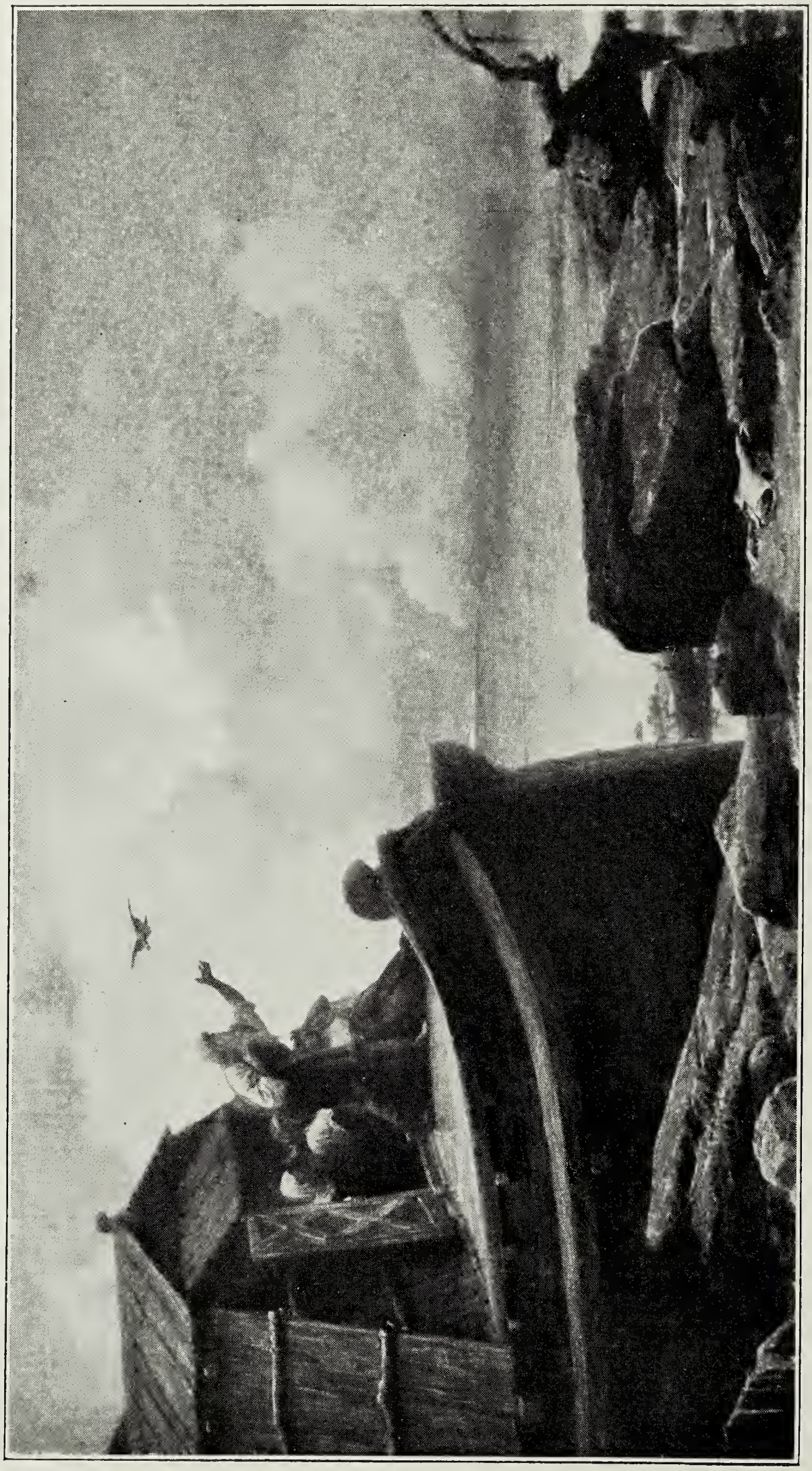
waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered. And all life died that moved upon the earth, both fowl, and cattle, and beast, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every living thing was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and creeping thing, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days.

And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that were with him in the ark; and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided. The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were closed, and the rain from heaven was restrained. And the waters returned from off the earth continually.

And after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters subsided. And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen.

"The Bow Shall Be in the Cloud"

And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made; and he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from off the face of the ground. But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned to him to the ark; for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. Then he put forth his



THE END OF THE DELUGE

From a painting by Gustave Brion

A graphic picture of the retreating clouds, the receding waters, the returning dove, and the joy and hope of a new world.

hand and took her and pulled her in to him into the ark. And he stayed yet other seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from off the earth.

And he stayed yet other seven days, and sent forth the dove, which returned not again to him any more.

And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth. Then Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry. And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried.

And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark. And Noah built an altar to the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

"And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

"Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things."

Then God spoke to Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, "I, behold, I establish my covenant with you and with your children after you; and with every living creature that is with you: never shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth."

And God said: "This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I set my rainbow in the

NOAH, AFTER THE DELUGE
From a painting by Henry F. Schopin

cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; and I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

"While the earth remaineth,
Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat,
Summer and winter,
Day and night,
Shall not cease."

Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The sons of Ham were Cush, and Mizraim, and Put, and Canaan. And to Cush was born Nimrod:

NIMROD, THE HUNTER HUNTED

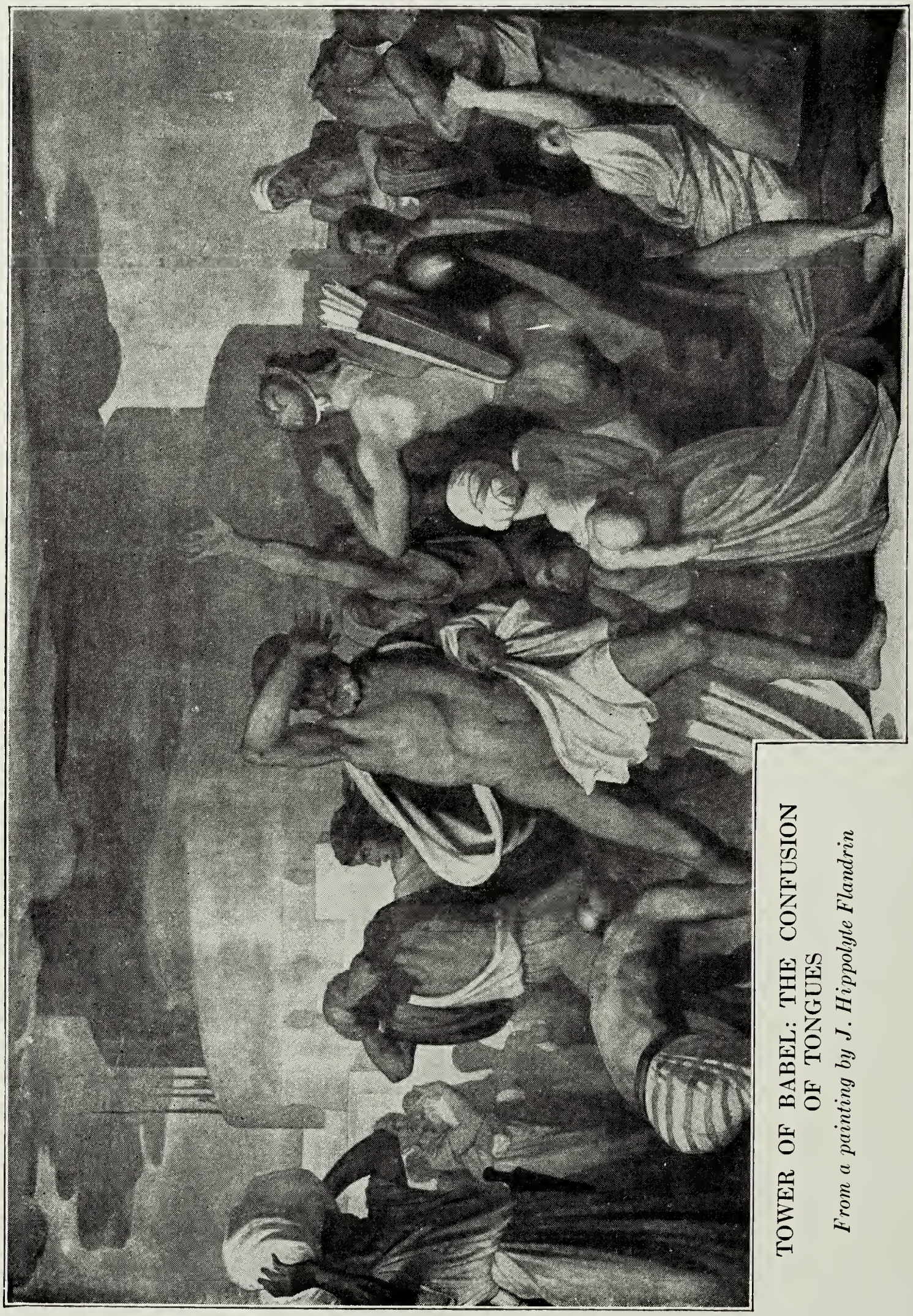
From a painting by Briton Rivière

The artist must have received his inspiration for this picture from the magnificent bas-reliefs from the palace of Ashurbanipal, now in the British Museum. From contemporary records we learn that hunting was the major sport of the kings of Assyria, and that of all beasts the lion was the only one worthy of the royal spear. In the Assyrian bas-reliefs one finds the intense action and vivid animal psychology which Rivière has depicted here.

he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; wherefore it is said, "Even as Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord." And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel.

HOW LANGUAGES GREW AND NATIONS AROSE

Now the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar [Babylonia]; and they dwelt there. Then said they one to another, "Come, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly." So they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.



TOWER OF BABEL: THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES

From a painting by J. Hippolyte Flandrin

They also said, "Come, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach to heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men had built. Then the Lord said: "Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Come, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."

So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off building the city.

Therefore is the name of it called Babel [Confusion][6]; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

BUILDING THE TOWER OF BABEL

From a painting by James J. Tissot

THE TOWER OF BABEL

Far in the eastern wild, begirt by sands,
A rugged pile, like some grim giant, stands:
Rude stones, that once, perchance, with beaming grace,
Had glowed in statues, strew its circling base;
Though crushed the halls that Time's dread secrets keep,
Still, stage on stage, the crumbling platforms sweep:
High on its brow a dark mass rears its form,
Defying ages, mocking fire and storm:
Struck by a thousand lightnings, still 'tis there,
As proud in ruin, haughty in despair.
O oldest fabric reared by hands of man!
Built ere Art's dawn on Europe's shores began!
Rome's moldering shrines, and Tadmor's columns gray,
Beside yon mass, seem things of yesterday!
In breathless awe, in musing reverence, bow,
'Tis hoary Babel glooms before you now;
The tower at which the Almighty's shaft was hurled,
The mystery, fear, and wonder of the world!

—*Nicholas Michell*

DEEDS OF DARING AND DEVOTION

BALAAM

The Prophet Who Could Not Lie

Persons of the Narrative

Balaam, a seer of the East
Balak, the king of Moab
Elders of Moab and of Midian, sent by Balak to Balaam
The angel of the Lord
Two servants of Balaam

Places

Pethor, on the Euphrates, home of Balaam; a Moabite city on the banks of the Arnon; several places of worship in Moab

Time

Near the close of Israel's wilderness journey

MOAB'S PANIC OVER ISRAEL

NOW Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel.[7] And Moab said to the elders of Midian, "Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field."

Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites[8] at that time. He sent messengers therefore to Balaam the son of Beor, to Pethor, which is by the river, to the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying: "Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me. Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me: perhaps I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land; for I know that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed."

And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the rewards of divination in their hand; and they came unto Balaam, and spoke to him the words of Balak.

And he said to them, "Lodge here this night, and I will bring you word again, as the Lord shall speak to me." So the princes of Moab abode with Balaam.

Then God came to Balaam, and said, "What men are these with thee?"

And Balaam said to God: "Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent to me, saying, 'Behold, there is a people come out of Egypt, who covereth the face of the earth: come now, curse them; perhaps I shall be able to overcome them, and drive them out.'"

But God said to Balaam, "Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people; for they are blessed."

So Balaam rose up in the morning, and said to the princes of Balak, "Get you into your land; for the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you."

And the princes of Moab rose up, and they went to Balak, and said, "Balaam refuseth to come with us."

Then Balak sent yet again princes, more, and more honorable than they. And they came to Balaam, and said to him: "Thus saith Balak the son of Zippor, 'Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming to me: for I will promote thee to very great honor, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest to me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people.'"

And Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, "If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more. Now therefore, I pray you, tarry ye also here this night, that I may know what the Lord will say to me more."

And God came to Balaam at night, and said to him, "If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but yet the word which I say to thee, that shalt thou do."

HOW BALAAM WAS REBUKED

Nevertheless Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab.

Then God's anger was kindled because he went; and the angel of the Lord stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him.

And the ass saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field. Then Balaam struck the ass, to turn her into the way. But the angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, a

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THE HILLS OF MOAB EAST OF THE JORDAN

These cliffs are in reality the mud deposits at the bottom of the old lake that in geologic days filled the rift of the Jordan, from the waters of Merom nearly to the Red Sea. As the rainfall slackened, the lake contracted, until now the Dead Sea is its final representative. The Jordan cutting its way through this silt has left steep banks on both sides, particularly on the eastern or Moab side. When wet, this silt becomes the stickiest mud in the world.

wall being on this side, and a wall on that side. And when the ass saw the angel of the Lord, she pressed herself against the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall: so he struck her again.

Then the angel of the Lord went further, and stood in a narrow place, where there was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. And when the ass saw the angel of the Lord, she lay down under Balaam; and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he struck the ass with his staff.

Then the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to thee, that thou hast struck me these three times?"

And Balaam said to the ass, "Because thou hast mocked me; I would there were a sword in my hand, for now I would kill thee."

But the ass said to Balaam, "Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was thine to this day? Hath it been my habit to do so to thee?"

And he said, "No."

Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, with his sword drawn in his hand; and he bowed down his head, and fell on his face.

And the angel of the Lord said to him: "Why hast thou struck thine ass these three times? Behold, I went out to withstand thee, because thy way is perverse before me: and the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times. Unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive."

Then Balaam said to the angel of the Lord, "I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodst in the way against me; now therefore if it displease thee, I will go back again."

But the angel of the Lord said to Balaam, "Go with the men; but only the word I shall speak to thee, that thou shalt speak."

BLESSINGS INSTEAD OF CURSES

Balaam Asserts that He Will Speak Only the Truth

Now when Balak heard that Balaam was come, he went out to meet him to the city of Moab, which is on the border of the Arnon, which is in the utmost part of the border. And Balak said to Balaam, "Did I not earnestly send to thee to call thee? wherefore camest thou not to me? am I not able indeed to promote thee to honor?"

And Balaam said to Balak, "Lo, I am come to thee: have I now any power at all to say anything? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak."

And Balaam went with Balak, and they came unto Kiriath-huzoth. And Balak offered oxen and sheep,[9] and sent to Balaam, and to the princes that were with him.

And it came to pass on the morrow, that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into the high places of Baal, and he saw from thence the utmost part of the people.

And Balaam said to Balak, "Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven oxen and seven rams."

Then Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram.

And Balaam said to Balak, "Stand by thy burnt offering, and I will go: perhaps the Lord will come to meet me; and whatsoever he showeth me I will tell thee."

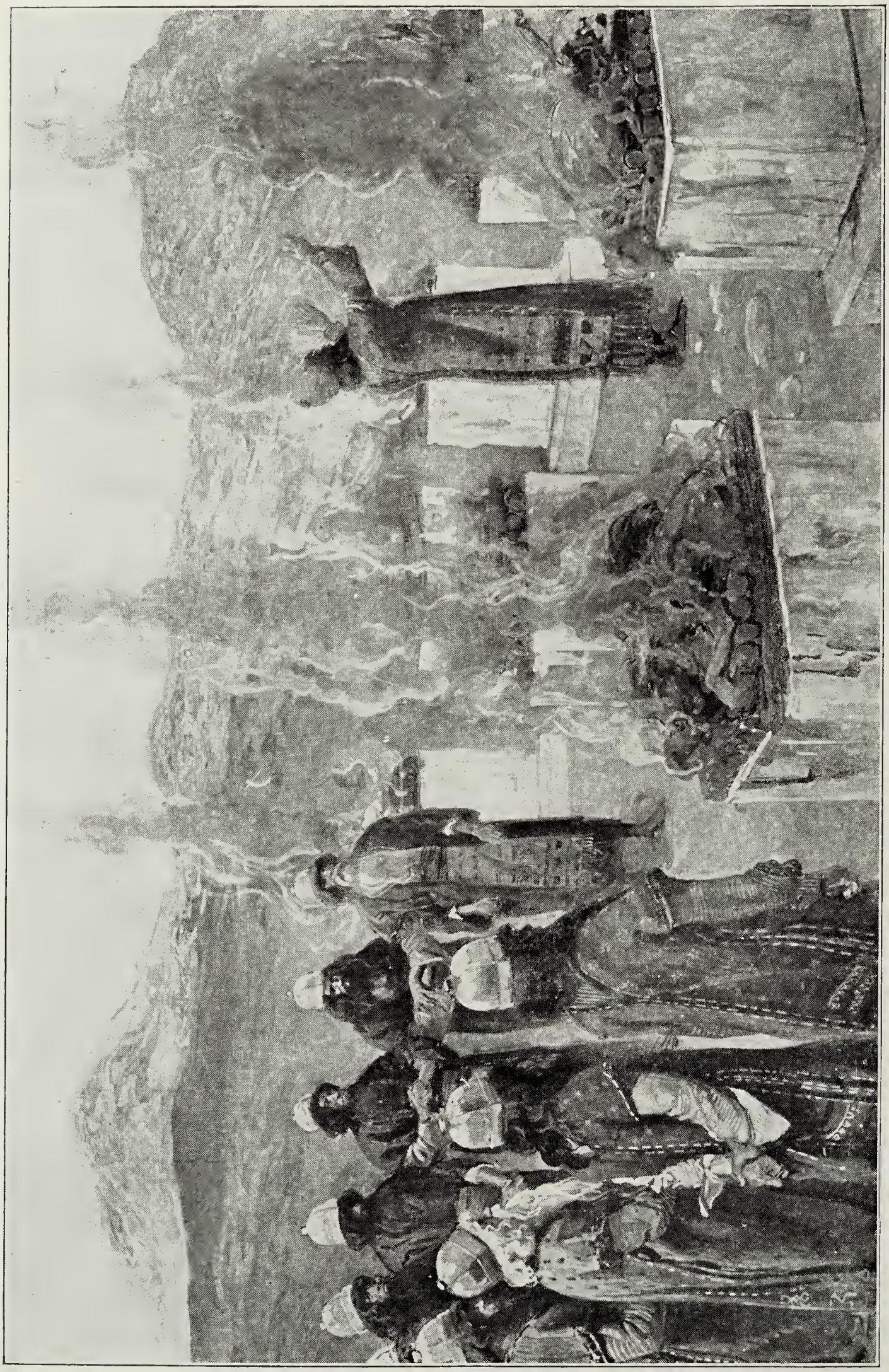
So he went to a high place. And God met Balaam: and Balaam said to him, "I have prepared the seven altars, and I have offered up on every altar a bullock and a ram."

Balaam Blesses Israel

Now the Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, "Return to Balak, and thus thou shalt speak."

And he returned to him, and, lo, he was standing by his burnt offering, he, and all the princes of Moab.

Then Balaam took up his parable, and said:



THE SEVEN ALTARS OF BAAL
From a painting by James J. Tissot

"Balak the king of Moab hath brought me
From Aram, out of the mountains of the East,
Saying, 'Come, curse me Jacob,
And come, defy Israel.'
How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed?
And how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied?
For from the top of the rocks I see him,
And from the hills I behold him:
Lo, it is a people that dwelleth alone,
And shall not be reckoned among the nations.
Who can count the dust of Jacob,
Or number the fourth part of Israel?
Let me die the death of the righteous,
And let my last end be like his!"

And Balak said to Balaam, "What hast thou done to me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them altogether."

But he answered and said, "Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth?"

Balaam Again Blesses Israel

And he said to Balak, "Stand here by thy burnt offering, while I meet the Lord yonder." And the Lord met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth. And he came to Balak, and, lo, he was standing by his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab with him.

And he took up his parable and said:

"God is not a man that he should lie,
Neither the son of man that he should repent.
Hath he said, and will he not do it?
Or hath he spoken, and will he not make it good?
Behold, I have received commandment to bless:
And he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it.
He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob,

THE PROPHECY OF BALAAM
From a painting by Hippolyte Flandrin

Neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel:
The Lord his God is with him,
And the shout of a king is among them.

Surely there is no enchantment with Jacob,
Neither is there any divination with Israel:
Now shall it be said of Jacob and of Israel,
'What hath God wrought!'

And Balak said to Balaam, "Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all." But Balaam answered and said to Balak, "Told I not thee, saying, 'All that the Lord speaketh, that must I do'?"

Balaam Blesses Israel the Third Time

And Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, that looketh down upon the desert. And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel dwelling according to their tribes.

And the spirit of God came upon him, and he took up his parable and said:

"How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob,
And thy dwellings, O Israel!
As the valleys are they spread forth,
As gardens by the river's side,
As oaks that the Lord hath planted,
As cedar trees beside the waters.
Water shall flow from his buckets,
And his seed shall be in many waters,
And his king shall be higher than Agag,[10]
And his kingdom shall be exalted.
God bringeth him forth out of Egypt;
He hath as it were the strength of the wild ox:
He shall eat up the nations his enemies,
And shall break their bones in pieces,
And pierce them through with his arrows.

He couched, he lay down as a lion,
And as a lioness; who shall rouse him up?
Blessed be he that blesseth thee,
And cursed be he that curseth thee."

Once More the Word Is Blessing

Then Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his hands together: and Balak said to Balaam: "I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed them these three times. Therefore now flee thou to thy place. I thought to promote thee to great honor; but, lo, the Lord hath kept thee back from honor."

But Balaam said to Balak: "Spoke I not also to thy messengers whom thou sentest to me, saying, 'If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord, to do either good or bad of my own mind; what the Lord speaketh that will I speak'? And now, behold, I go to my people: come, therefore, I will tell thee beforehand what this people shall do to thy people in the days to come."

And he took up his parable, and said:

"I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not near:
A Star shall come forth out of Jacob,
And a Scepter shall rise out of Israel,
And shall smite the temples of Moab,
And destroy all the children of tumult.
And Edom shall become a possession;
Seir, his enemies, shall also be a possession,
While Israel doeth valiantly."

And Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place; and Balak also went his way.

SAMSON

The Weak Strong Man

To us this famous story teaches how fatal may be the weakness of a strong man. To the Hebrews it also gave a feeling of pride, as they thought how this champion played tricks upon their enemies, left them powerless, and at last gave his life in bringing upon them a great ruin.

Persons of the Narrative

Manoah, of the tribe of Dan
Manoah's wife
The angel of the Lord
Samson, son of Manoah, consecrated to be a Nazirite
A young Philistine woman of Timnath, wife of Samson
Thirty young Philistine men, wedding companions to Samson
The father of Samson's wife
Delilah, a Philistine woman, wife of Samson
Philistines, men of Judah, men of Gaza, Samson's kinsmen

Places

Zorah and Eshtaol, neighboring villages in the Valley of Sorek, home of the tribe of Dan; Timnath, a village just over the Philistine border; Lehi, of the tribe of Judah; Gaza, a chief city of the Philistines

Time

The days of the Judges

THE BIRTH AND YOUTH OF SAMSON

A Son Is Promised to Childless Parents

THERE was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife had no child. And the angel of the Lord appeared to the woman, and said to her: "Behold now, thou hast no child, but thou shalt have a son. Now therefore beware, I

© Curtis & Cameron

SAMSON

From a painting by Elihu Vedder

In this picture one must not fail to notice the frame in which Samson's exploits are so cunningly suggested. In the upper left-hand corner the bee and the lion's head recall his adventure and his riddle; in the upper right-hand corner appear the jawbone of the ass with which he slew a thousand men, and the millstone at which he toiled. In the side spaces are the two pillars of the Temple of Dagon, showing the cracks produced when Samson avenged himself on the day of his death. Below are the shears and the seven locks of his head in memory of the wily Delilah; and about the whole, binding it together, is the new magic rope with which he was bound, but which, at the exercise of his strength, "became as flax that was burnt with fire."

pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: for, lo, thou shalt have a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazirite[11] to God from his birth: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines."

Then the woman came and told her husband, saying: "A man of God came to me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible; but I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name:

but he said to me, 'Behold, thou shalt have a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing; for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from birth to the day of his death.'"

Then Manoah entreated the Lord, and said, "O my Lord, let the man of God whom thou didst send come again to us, and teach us what we shall do to the child that shall be born."

And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her. And the woman made haste, and ran, and showed her husband, and said to him, "Behold, the man hath appeared to me, that came to me the other day."

Then Manoah rose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said to him, "Art thou the man that spokest to the woman?" And he said, "I am."

The Father Asks How to Bring up His Child

And Manoah said, "Now let thy words come to pass. How shall we govern the child, and how shall we do to him?"

And the angel of the Lord said to Manoah, "Of all that I said to the woman let her beware. She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine nor strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe."

Then Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, "I pray thee, let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid for thee."

But the angel of the Lord said to Manoah, "Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it to the Lord." (For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the Lord.)

And Manoah said to the angel of the Lord, "What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honor?"

MANOAH'S OFFERING
From a painting by Rembrandt

And the angel of the Lord said to him, "Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?"

So Manoah took a kid with a meal offering, and offered it upon a rock to the Lord; and the angel did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar; and Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground. But the angel of the Lord did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the Lord. And Manoah said to his wife, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God."

But his wife said to him: "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering and a meal offering at our hands, neither would he have showed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these."

And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson [Little Sun]: and the child grew, and the Lord blessed him.

And the spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.[12]

SAMSON'S MARRIAGE WITH A FOREIGN WOMAN

He Wooes a Daughter of the Philistines

Now Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines. And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, "I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines: now therefore get her for me to be my wife."

Then his father and his mother said to him, "Is there not a woman among the daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the Philistines?"

And Samson said to his father, "Get her for me: for she pleaseth me well." (But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the Lord, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.)

Samson Revisits Timnah After a Notable Adventure

Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnah, and came to the vineyards of Timnah; and, behold, a young lion roared against him. And the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he tore him as he would have torn a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done.

Then he went down, and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.

After a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the body of the lion: and, behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the body of the lion. And he took thereof into his hands, and went on, eating as he went, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they ate: but he told them not that he had taken the honey out of the body of the lion.[13]

Samson Proposes a Riddle at His Wedding Feast

So his father went down to the woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do. And it came to pass, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him.

And Samson said to them: "I will now put forth a riddle to you: if ye can declare it me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of raiment. But if ye cannot declare it me, then shall ye give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of raiment."

And they said to him, "Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it."

And he said to them,

"Out of the eater came forth food,
And out of the strong came forth sweetness."

But they could not in three days expound the riddle.

And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they said to Samson's wife, "Entice thy husband, that he may declare to us the riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire: have ye called us to impoverish us?"

And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, "Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle to the children of my people, and hast not told it to me."

But he said to her, "Behold, I have not told it to my father nor my mother, and shall I tell it to thee?"

And she wept before him the seven days, while their feast lasted: and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she urged him much: and she told the riddle to the children of her people. And the men of the city said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down,

"What is sweeter than honey?
And what is stronger than a lion?"

Then he said to them,

"If ye had not plowed with my heifer,
Ye had not found out my riddle."

And the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them and took their spoil, and gave the changes of raiment to them that declared the riddle. And his anger was kindled, and he went up to his father's house. But Samson's wife was given to his companion, whom he had used as his friend.[14]

SAMSON'S VENGEANCE UPON THE PHILISTINES

He Destroys Their Grainfields and Slays Many

But it came to pass after a while, in the time of wheat harvest, that Samson visited his wife with a kid; and he said, "I will go in to visit my wife."

But her father would not allow him to go in. And her father said, "I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore I gave her to thy companion: is not her younger sister more beautiful than she? take her, I pray thee, instead of her."

But Samson said to them, "This time shall I be blameless in regard to the Philistines, when I do them a mischief."

And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between every two tails. And when he had set

the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing grain, with the vineyards and olives.

Then the Philistines said, "Who hath done this?"

And they answered, "Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he hath taken his wife, and given her to his companion." And the Philistines came up, and burnt her and her father with fire.

And Samson said to them, "Though ye have done this, yet will I be avenged of you, and after that I will cease." And he smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter: and he went down and dwelt in the top of the cliff Etam.

Samson's Enemies Are Helpless Because of His Strength

Then the Philistines went up, and pitched in Judah, and spread themselves in Lehi. And the men of Judah said, "Why are ye come up against us?"

And they answered, "To bind Samson are we come up, to do to him as he hath done to us."

Then three thousand men of Judah went to the top of the cliff Etam, and said to Samson, "Knowest thou not that the Philistines are rulers over us? what is this that thou hast done to us?"

And he said to them, "As they did to me, so have I done to them."

Then they said to him, "We are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines."

And Samson said to them, "Swear to me, that ye will not fall upon me yourselves."

And they spoke to him, saying, "No; but we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their hand: but surely we will not kill thee." And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him up from the cliff.

When he came to Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him: and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him,

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GAZA

Gaza, the last outpost of civilization toward the Egyptian desert. The main caravan line from Egypt to Babylon passes by this town. Along this road the conquerors of Palestine have always come, from Thothmes to Allenby. Here was fought the first battle for the liberation of Palestine in 1917. The navy bombarded Gaza from the sea, while Allenby's troops captured the gallantly defended trenches with which the olive orchards were honeycombed. Thus, at Gaza, began the returning tide of Christian domination.

and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands.

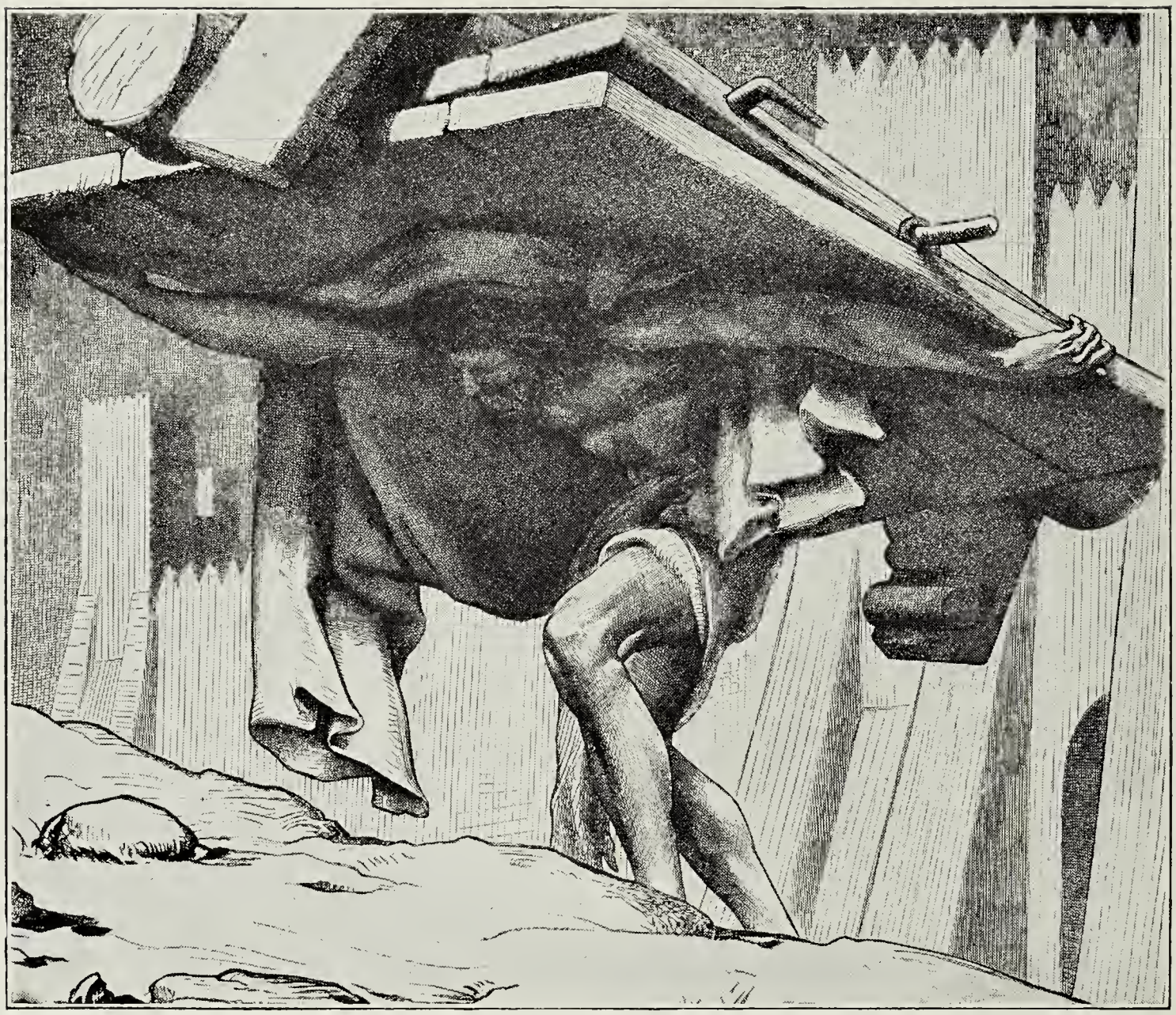
And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith. And Samson said:

"With the jawbone of an ass I have piled them up;
With the jawbone of an ass I have slain a thousand men."

And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast away the jawbone out of his hand. And that place was called Ramath-lehi [Mount Jawbone].

And he was sore athirst, and called on the Lord, and said, "Thou hast given this great deliverance by the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the enemy?"

But God clave the hollow place that is in Lehi, and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, his spirit came



SAMSON CARRYING THE GATES
From a drawing by Sir Frederick Leighton

again, and he revived: wherefore he called the name thereof En-hakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day.

Then went Samson to Gaza; and it was told the Gazites, saying, "Samson is come hither."

And they surrounded him, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, "In the morning, when it is day, we shall kill him."

Now Samson lay till midnight, and rose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of a hill that is before Hebron.

THE DECEITFULNESS OF DELILAH

The Philistines Offer a Huge Bribe

And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. And the lords of the Philistines came up to her, and said to her, "Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver."

And Delilah said to Samson, "Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee."

And Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven new bowstrings that were never dried, then shall I become weak, and be as another man."

Then the lords of the Philistines[15] brought up to her seven new bowstrings which had not been dried, and she bound him with them. Now there were men lying in wait abiding with her in the inner chamber. And she said to him, "The Philistines are upon thee, Samson!"

And he broke the bowstrings as a string of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known.

Then Delilah said to Samson, "Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound." And he said to her, "If they only bind me with new ropes wherewith no work hath been done, then shall I become weak, and be as another man."

So Delilah took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said to him, "The Philistines are upon thee, Samson!"

And there were liers-in-wait abiding in the inner chamber. But he broke them from off his arms like a thread.

Then Delilah said to Samson, "Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound."

SAMSON IS BETRAYED

From a painting by Solomon J. Solomon

"The Philistines be upon thee, Samson!" Even with his divine strength gone, Samson is almost a match for his captors. His huge body seems bursting with energy, and the havoc he is making tells only too plainly how superior to theirs is the human strength of his huge frame. Samson's face betrays his own fear that at last he is undone.

And he said to her, "If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web in the loom."

And she fastened it with the pin, and said to him, "The Philistines are upon thee, Samson!"

And he awaked out of his sleep, and plucked away the pin of the beam, and the web.

Finally she said to him, "How canst thou say, 'I love thee,' when thy heart is not with me? Thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength lieth."

Samson Tells the Sacred Secret

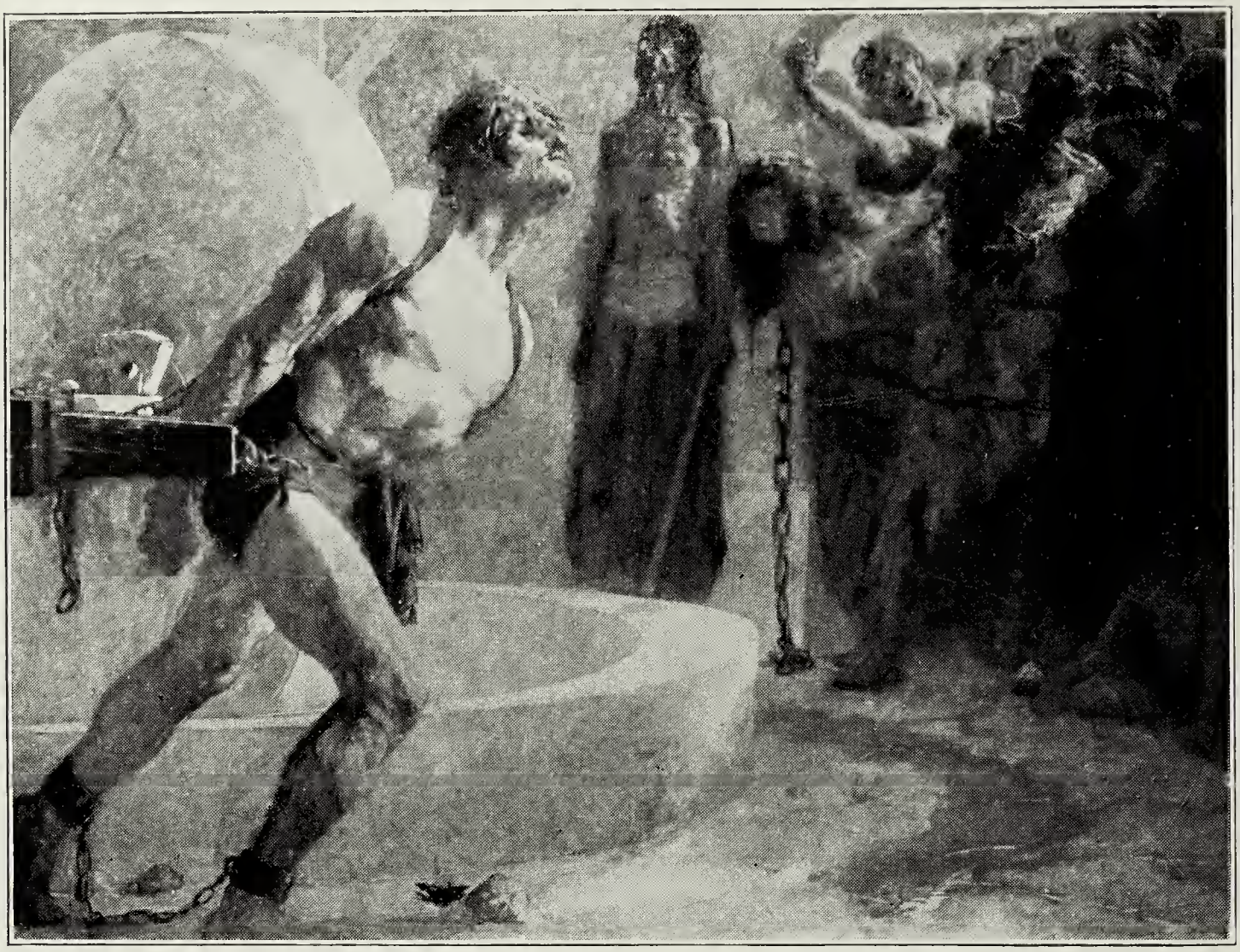
And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed to death; that he told her all his heart, and said to her, "There hath not come a razor upon my head; for I have been a Nazirite to God from my birth: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man."

SAMSON AND DELILAH
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up this once, for he hath showed me all his heart." Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her, and brought money in their hand.

And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. And she said, "The Philistines are upon thee, Samson!"

And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, "I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself free." And he knew not that the Lord was departed from him.



SAMSON BOUND IN THE PRISON HOUSE

From a painting by Dechemond

Prominent among the blind giant's tormentors, one sees the gloating face of Delilah, near the post to which they chain Samson when he is not at work.

But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he ground in the prison house. Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

Samson Takes Fatal Vengeance

Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, "Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand." And when the people saw him, they praised their god: for they said:

"Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy,
And the destroyer of our country, who slew many of us."

And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, "Call for Samson, that he may make us sport."[16]

So they called for Samson out of the prison house; and he made sport before them: and they set him between the pillars. And Samson said to the lad that held him by the hand, "Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them."

DEATH OF SAMSON
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

Then Samson called to the Lord, and said, "O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes."

And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house rested, and leaned upon them, the one with his right hand, and the other with his left. And Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines."

And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein.

DELILAH

From a painting by Heinrich Commans

So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.

Then his brethren and all the house of his father came down, and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the burying place of Manoah his father.

SAMSON

O wherefore was my birth from heaven foretold
Twice by an angel, who at last, in sight
Of both my parents, all in flames ascended
From off the altar, where an offering burned,
As in a fiery column charioting
His godlike presence, and from some great act
Or benefit revealed to Abraham's race?
Why was my breeding ordered and prescribed
As of a person separate to God,
Destined for great exploits, if I must die
Betrayed, captive, and both my eyes put out,
Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze;
To grind in brazen fetters under task,
With this Heaven-gifted strength? O glorious strength,
Put to the labor of a beast, debased
Lower than bondslave! Promise was, that I
Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver;
Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him
Eyeless in Gaza, at the mill with slaves,
Himself in bonds under Philistine yoke.

—*From "Samson Agonistes," by Milton*

CARRYING OUT MICAH'S IDOLS

From a painting by James J. Tissot

The artist has represented here a divinity in the shape of a bull, the ancient Semitic symbol for power and virility. He has also shown us idols in human shape, the so-called teraphim or household divinities, the "molten and graven" images of the Biblical story. These were perhaps statues of ancestors, whom all early peoples venerated.

MICAH

This narrative of the emigration of the Danites in the days of the Judges describes a type of character familiar in all times. The man thinks he can make up for his misdeeds by giving money, and believes that a priest can be religious in his stead; and when things that have to do with outward ceremonies and observances are taken away, he has no faith or comfort left. In this story, we can see, also, some of the primitive ideas and observances which characterized the religious life of the Hebrew colonists in Canaan, before the days of kingly rule when worship became more highly centralized and the evils of idolatry became more apparent.

THE SANCTUARY OF MICAH

He Multiplies His Idols

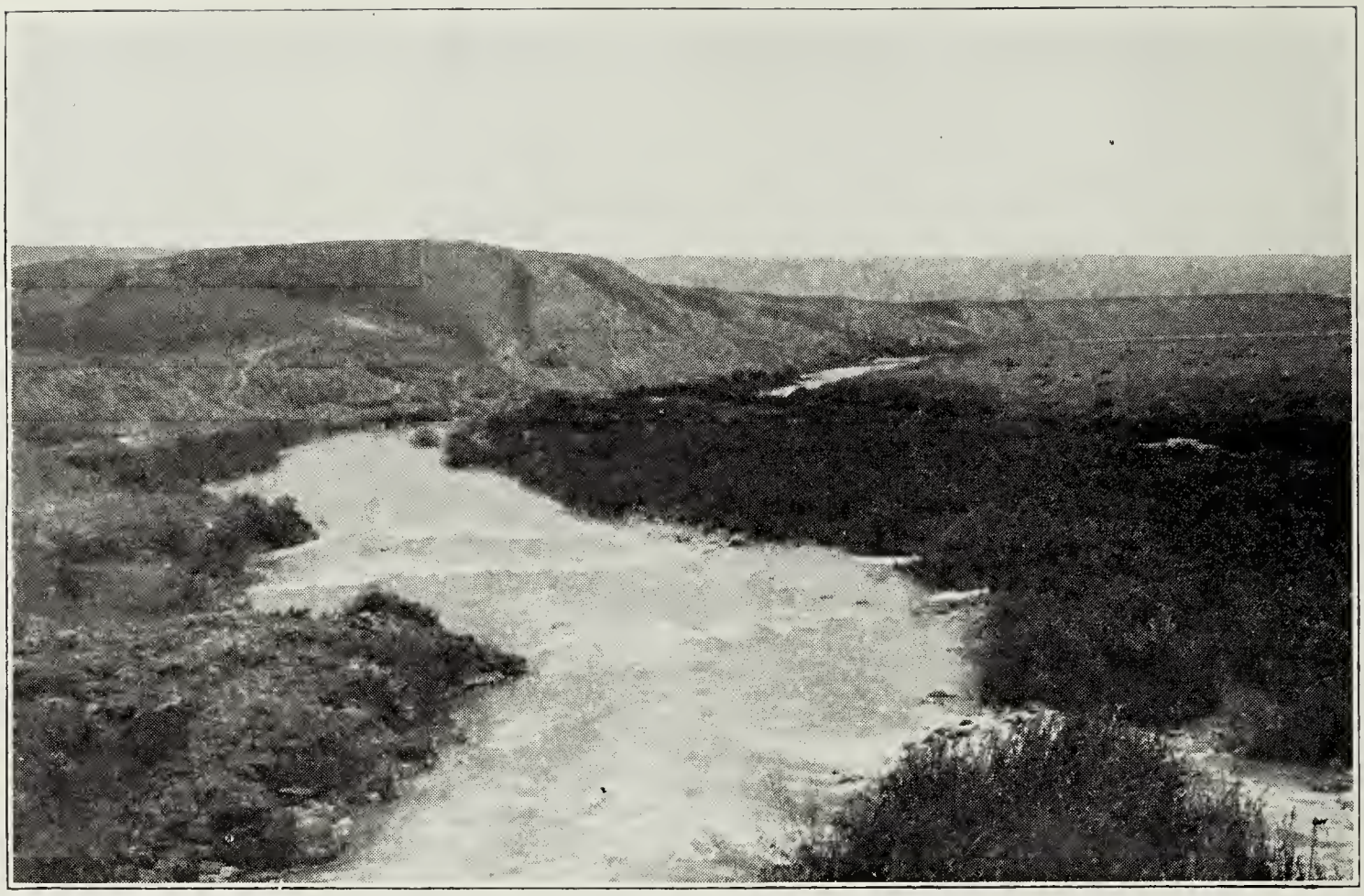
THERE was a man of the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Micah. And he said to his mother, "The eleven hundred shekels of silver that were taken from thee, about which thou cursedst, and spokest of also in mine ears, behold, the silver is with me: I took it."

And his mother said, "Blessed be thou of the Lord, my son."

And when he had restored the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, his mother said, "I had wholly dedicated the silver to the Lord from my hand for my son, to make a graven image and a molten image. Now therefore I will restore it to thee."

Yet he restored the money to his mother; and his mother took two hundred shekels of silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image and a molten image.[17] And they were in the house of Micah. And the man Micah had a house of God, and he made an ephod, and teraphim [idols] and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest.

In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes.



AT THE UPPER STREAM OF THE JORDAN

He Hires a Levite Priest

Now there was a young man out of Beth-lehem-judah, of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there. And the man departed out of the city from Beth-lehem-judah to sojourn where he could find a place: and he came to the hill country of Ephraim to the house of Micah, as he journeyed.

And Micah said to him, "Whence comest thou?"

He said to him, "I am a Levite of Beth-lehem-judah, and I go to sojourn where I may find a place."

And Micah said to him, "Dwell with me, and be to me a father and a priest, and I will give thee ten shekels of silver by the year, and a suit of apparel, and thy victuals."

So the Levite went in. And the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the young man was to him as one of his sons. And Micah consecrated the Levite; and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah.

Then said Micah, "Now know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite for my priest."

ESTABLISHMENT OF A SANCTUARY AT DAN

The Danites Reconnoiter

In those days there was no king in Israel: and in those days the tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; for to that day all their inheritance had not been allotted to them among the tribes of Israel. And the children of Dan sent of their family five men from their coasts, men of valor, from Zorah, and from Eshtaol, to spy out the land, and to search it; and they said to them, "Go, search the land": and they came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, and lodged there.

When they were by the house of Micah, they knew the voice of the young man the Levite: and they turned in thither, and said to him, "Who brought thee hither? and what doest thou in this place? and what hast thou here?"

He said to them, "Thus and thus dealeth Micah with me, and hath hired me, and I am his priest."

And they said to him, "Ask counsel, we pray thee, of God, that we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous." And the priest said to them, "Go in peace: before the Lord is your way wherein ye go."

Then the five men departed, and came to Laish, and saw the people that were therein, how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and secure; and there was no magistrate in the land, that might put them to shame in anything; and they were far from the Sidonians,[18] and had no business with any man.

Then they came to their brethren to Zorah and Eshtaol: and their brethren said to them, "What say ye?"

And they said, "Rise, that we may go up against them: for we have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good. And

are ye still? be not slothful to go, and to enter to possess the land. When ye go, ye shall come to a people secure, and to a large land; for God hath given it into your hands; a place where there is no want of anything that is in the earth."

So there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol, six hundred men, appointed with weapons of war. And they went up, and pitched in Kiriath-jearim, in Judah. And they passed thence to the hill country of Ephraim, and came to the house of Micah.

The Danites Capture Idols and Priest

Then answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish, and said to their brethren, "Do ye know that there is in these houses an ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image? now therefore consider what ye have to do."

So they turned thitherward, and came to the house of the young man, the Levite, even to the house of Micah, and

THE VICINITY OF LAISH

saluted him. And the six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, who were of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate. And the five men that went to spy out the land went into Micah's house, and fetched the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image. But the priest said to them, "What do ye?"

And they said to him: "Hold thy peace, lay thy hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us a father and a priest. Is it better for thee to be a priest to the house of one man, or a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel?"

Then the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midst of the people. So they turned and departed, and put the little ones and the cattle and the goods before them.

When they were a good way from the house of Micah, the men that were in the houses near to Micah's house were gathered together, and overtook the children of Dan. And they cried to the children of Dan. And they turned their faces, and said to Micah, "What aileth thee, that thou comest with such a company?"

And he said, "Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and ye are gone away: and what have I more? and how then say ye unto me, 'What aileth thee?'"

But the children of Dan said to him, "Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest angry fellows run upon thee, and thou lose thy life, with the lives of thy household." And the children of Dan went their way. So when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his house.

So they took the things which Micah had made, and the priest which he had, and came to Laish, to a people quiet and secure: and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and burned the city with fire. There was no deliverer, because it was far from Sidon. And they built a city, and dwelt therein. And they called the name of the city Dan,

GROTTO OF BANIAS NEAR ANCIENT DAN

This is a veritable sanctuary of waters. The cave from which issues one of the principal affluents of the Jordan has been from early times regarded as sacred. The niches carved in the mountain wall date from Greek times, for the Greeks regarded this cave as a haunt of Pan and his woodland nymphs. In fact, the name Banias is a reminiscence of the Greek God Pan. In New Testament times the settlement near here was called Cæsarea Philippi.

after the name of Dan their father, who was born to Israel.

Then the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan the son of Gershom the son of Moses, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land. And they set them up Micah's graven image, which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

ELIJAH

The Prophet of the Wilderness

ELIJAH appears on the page of Scripture like a flash of lightning. Without warning the Bible introduces us to this strange and fiery personality as he confronts Ahab, king of Israel, in some out-of-the-way place. Ahab must have been startled at his appearance,—a wild-looking man who had never cut his hair and beard and whose only clothes consisted of a shaggy sheep's pelt. He was a Nazirite, wholly devoted to the service of Jehovah and separated from the conventional life of civilization. He dwelt alone east of Jordan, "a sojourner," or solitary nomad, living on no one knows what, and spending his days and nights in pondering upon the character of God and his requirements of men. Something of what was going on in the western land must have been borne to his ears. Perhaps one of the priests of Jehovah, escaped from some shrine that Jezebel had broken up, may have fled to him for counsel. At any rate he knew the situation. He knew that Ahab ultimately was responsible for it, and that his duty was to become the mouthpiece of Jehovah in trying to stem the tide of idolatry that was gaining such headway.

Elijah delivered his warning to Ahab and disappeared. The Bible story tells of his stay in the wilderness until the Brook Cherith dried up; then of his journeying to the Phœnician country, where the widow kept him alive.

The next act in the drama is his sudden reappearance and his demand of Ahab that he summon all Israel to Mount Carmel for a trial of strength. The dramatic story of his contest with the priests of Baal is one of the most vivid in all the Bible. The result was a victory for Jehovah, revealed first in the descent of lightning from heaven, then in the terrific downpour of rain which broke the long drought. Queen Jezebel, looking out of her palace window in Jezreel, could see the smoke of the great burning fifteen miles away, and before Ahab and the panting prophet who was his outrunner arrived at the gate, had time to make up her mind what to do. She did not dare to put Elijah to death; so she frightened him out of the country. For a period, no one knows how long, Elijah was a fugitive, first to Beersheba on the southern limit of Israel, then to the great wilderness beyond—to the land where Jehovah first appeared to his people in the burning bush and the thunders and earthquakes of Mount Sinai. Here, amid the scenes where Jehovah made his first covenant with his people Israel, Elijah had a new vision of his duty. On his return he anointed Elisha to be prophet in his room, a man of very different temperament

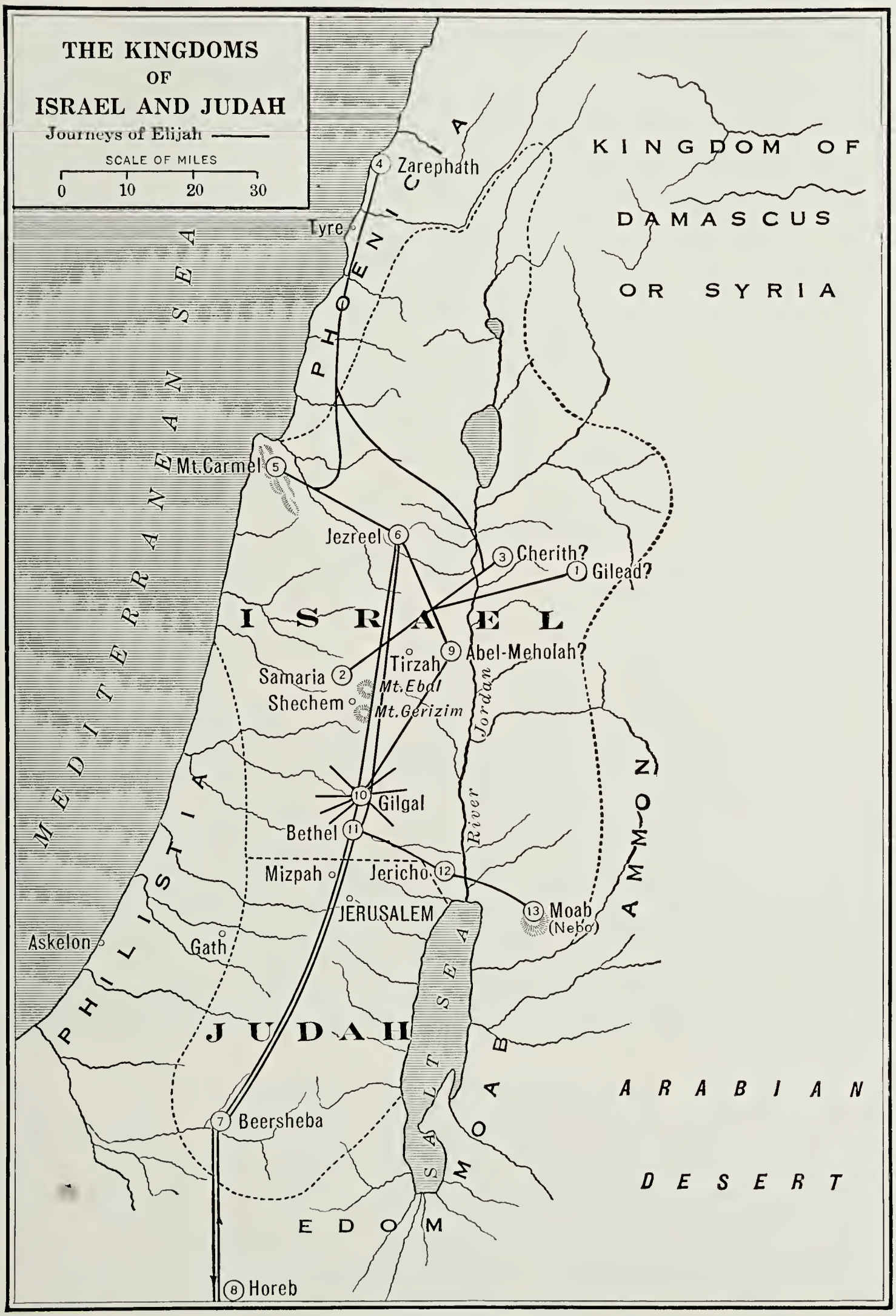
from himself; and then he faced Ahab on a moral question in which the prophet became the spokesman for justice and for democracy.

As the incident of Carmel reveals the proselyting activities of Queen Jezebel in the realm of religion, so the incident of Naboth's vineyard betrays her sinister influence upon the ideal of the kingship. Israel's king had always been in theory the chief councilor of the elders of the nation. However much it sometimes seemed otherwise, the king's authority in reality rested upon the sanction of the men of Israel; king and subject were bound by the same laws. Jezebel had been reared in a different atmosphere. Her father won his crown by assassinating his master, and ruled in the belief that his will was the source of law. His daughter Jezebel therefore had no scruples in giving short shrift to the priests of Jehovah who stood in the way of advancing the worship of Baal; and when she found that her husband who was king in name was not autocratic in fact, she gave him an object lesson on how kings are supposed to deal with stubborn subjects. To her mind the divine right of kings was the right of kings to do as they pleased.

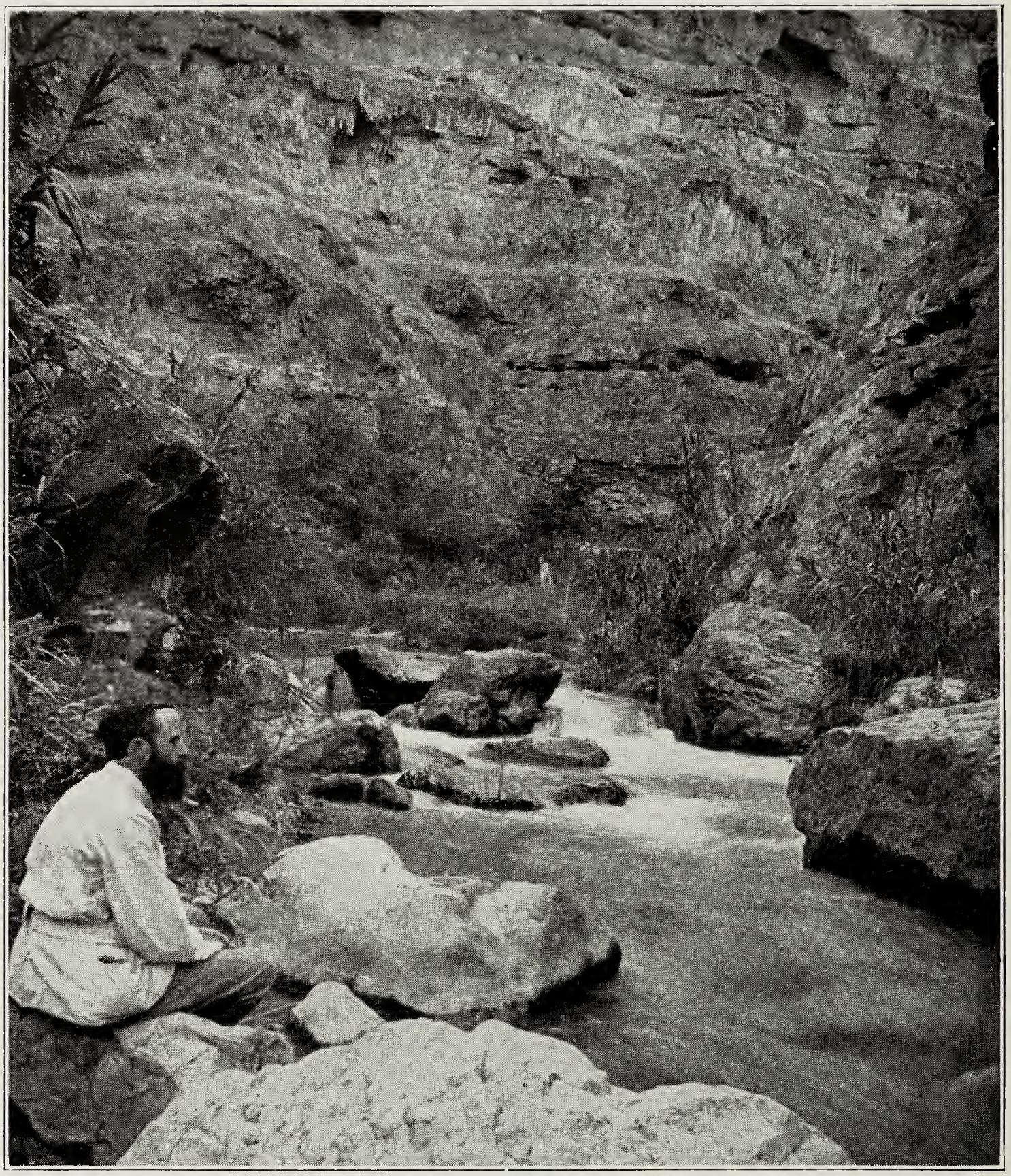
Elijah saw that in Ahab's conduct with Naboth a great principle was at stake, the principle of the rights of the common man as over against the demands of his king. Fresh from his experience with Jehovah in the desert, he took unerringly the popular side and pronounced a judgment upon Ahab, the righteousness of which has been approved by every prophet and every advance in democratic legislation since his day.

His work was now done. Jehovah henceforth could be best served by a man with more social contacts and with greater diplomacy than Elijah possessed. In obedience to the inner impulse of the spirit, he therefore took his young successor and with him went across the Jordan, where, in some unidentified spot in the wilderness that he loved, he vanished from the earth.

Elijah was uncompromising and destructive. He had two great ideals: that Jehovah is the only God for Israel, and that justice is greater than the kingship. One might almost say that Elijah's work was a protest against the entire Canaanite civilization—against life in towns with their vice, against agriculture and trade with their luxuries, against the kingship with its tendency to tyranny, against every departure from the freedom and the simplicity and the narrowness of nomad life. He had no ability to reform, but only to clear the path for reform; not to build up the good by patient teaching, but to protest against the bad. Yet in preserving the old religion for Israel, he proved to be what Elisha said he had been, "the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof." It was his uncompromising and aggressive loyalty to Jehovah that led the Jews of a later day to place his name at the head of all the prophets, even as Moses was chief of lawgivers, and that caused Jesus and his contemporaries to see in the fiery John the Baptist a second Elijah.



ISRAEL AND JUDAH



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THE TRADITIONAL BROOK CHERITH

This brook flows out from the rocky canyon of the Wady Kelt opposite Jericho. Here, according to Scripture, Elijah was fed by the ravens. The wild loneliness of this region has made it a natural refuge for centuries. The pursued, the persecuted, the malefactor, and the saint have here found safety or peace, according to their desire. The many caverns furnish natural shelter, and the brook a plentiful supply of water. The traveler today as he looks off into the distance may still see, sailing down the tremendous gorge, an occasional family of ravens to remind him that God can feed his people by means the most unlikely.

ELIJAH

Persons of the Narrative

Elijah of Tishbeh in Gilead, prophet of Jehovah
Ahab, king of Israel
Jezebel, a princess of Sidon, Ahab's wife
A widow of Zarephath, near Sidon
The widow's son
Obadiah, a pious Israelite, governor of Ahab's household
Prophets of Baal and Ashtoreth, contending with Elijah
Elisha's servant
A messenger of Jezebel
An angel of the Lord
Elisha, servant and successor to Elijah
Naboth of Jezreel, owner of a vineyard
Elders of Jezreel, false witnesses, executioners
Sons of the prophets
Officers, courtiers and soldiers, in attendance on Ahab

Places

Jezreel, the summer capital of King Ahab, the Brook Cherith, east of Jordan; Zarephath; Mount Carmel; the wilderness near Beer-sheba; Mount Horeb; the Jordan Valley at Abel-meholah; Gilgal in Ephraim; Beth-el and Jericho, a place beyond Jordan

Time

The days of Ahab, son of Omri, king of Israel, about 870 B.C.

A LONG DROUGHT

Elijah Takes up Life in the Wilderness

NOW Elijah the Tishbite who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." [19]

And the word of the Lord came to him saying, "Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook

ELIJAH
From a painting by Burne-Jones

Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there."

And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook. And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land. Then the word of the Lord came to him saying, "Rise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Sidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee."[20]

Elijah Finds Hospitality

So he rose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering sticks: and he called to her, and said, "Bring me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink." And as she was going to bring it, he called to her, and said, "Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thy hand." And she said, "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in the jar, and a little oil in

ELIJAH RESTORING THE WIDOW'S SON

From a painting by Ford Madox Brown

the cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

But Elijah said to her: "Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it to me, and afterward make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, 'The jar of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.'"

And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord.

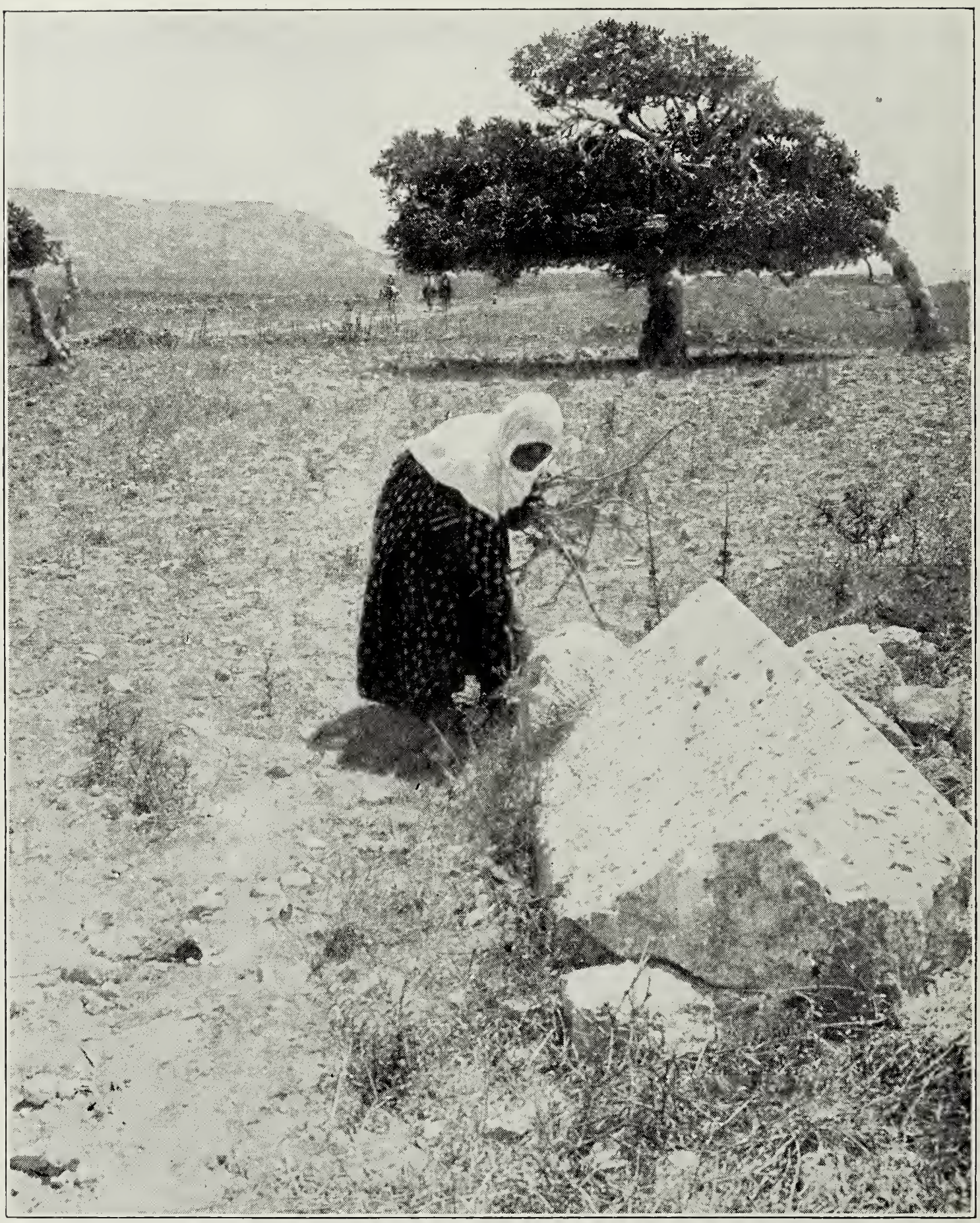
And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him. And she said to Elijah, "What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come to me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?"

Then he said to her, "Give me thy son." And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. And he cried to the Lord, and said, "O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?"

And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried to the Lord, and said, "O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again."

And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him to his mother: and Elijah said, "See, thy son liveth."

And the woman said to Elijah, "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth."



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ZAREPHATH

Like her prototype in Scripture, this widow is gathering sticks. The village to which she belongs is on the hill to the left. Not far away on the right the blue sea is breaking. This is the land of Phœnicia, between Tyre and Sidon. The name Zarephath means a melting and liquefying; hence, from the portions of glass and vitrified pottery found there in abundance, it is concluded that the town was a place of furnaces. Among the ruins there is a covered fountain, still in use, which was, perhaps, flowing in the time of drought when Elijah asked drink and food of the widow of Zarephath.

ELIJAH AND THE PRIESTS OF BAAL

Obadiah Informs Ahab that Elijah Is Near

And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, "Go, show thyself to Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth." And Elijah went to show himself to Ahab.

And there was a sore famine in Samaria. And Ahab called Obadiah, who was over the household. (Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly: for when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the Lord, Obadiah took a hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.) And Ahab said to Obadiah, "Go through the land, to all fountains of water, and to all brooks: perhaps we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts."

So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.

Now as Obadiah was on the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, "Art thou my lord Elijah?"

And he answered him, "I am: go, tell thy lord, 'Behold, Elijah is here.'"

And he said, "Wherein have I sinned, that thou wouldst deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? As the Lord thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, 'He is not here,' he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. And now thou sayest, 'Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.' And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the spirit of the Lord shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth. Was it not told

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FUEL VENDOR

The tough bushes with which this donkey is loaded constitute almost the only natural fuel used by the peasants in Palestine. Women gather it on the hillside and usually bring it home in huge bundles on their heads. This is the chief fuel used in the limekilns. It is also said to be the fuel referred to in the Book of Proverbs—"As is the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of a fool."

my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the Lord, how I hid a hundred men of the Lord's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water? And now thou sayest, 'Go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here,' and he shall slay me."

And Elijah said, "As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to him today."

So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah.

Elijah Proposes a Test of Power

And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?"

And he answered: "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed the Baalim. Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel to mount Carmel,[21] and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, who eat at Jezebel's table." So Ahab sent to all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together to mount Carmel.

Then Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him."

But the people answered him not a word.

Then said Elijah to the people: "I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God."

And all the people answered and said, "It is well spoken!"

Baal Remains Silent

And Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under."

So they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, "O Baal, hear us!" But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made.

And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, "Cry aloud! for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he sleepeth, and must be waked."

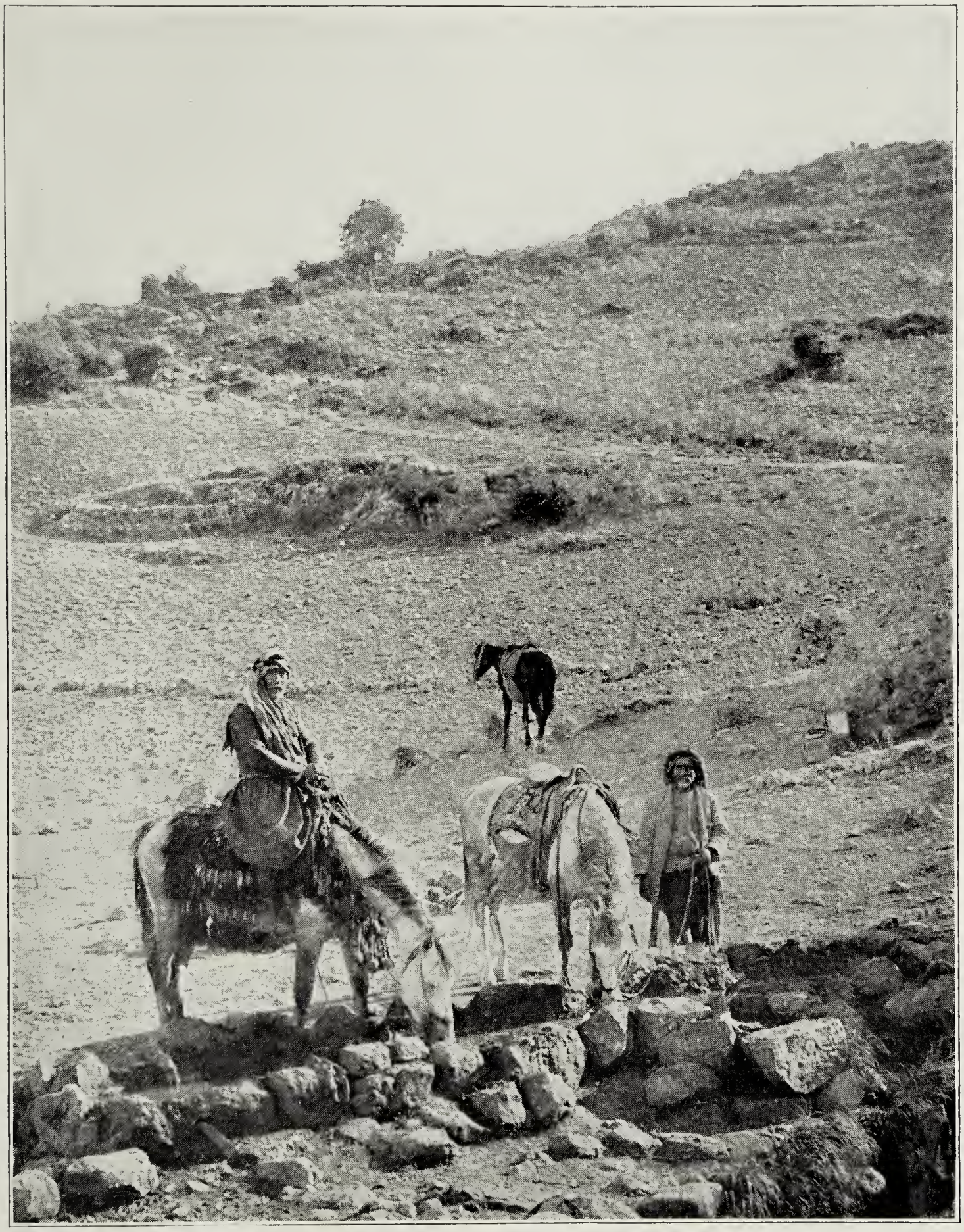
Then they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lances, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it came to pass, when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.

The Fire of Jehovah Falls from Heaven

And Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." And all the people came near to him.

And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob. And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid it on the wood. And he said, "Fill four jars with water, and pour it on the burnt offering, and on the wood."

And he said, "Do it the second time." So they did it the second time.



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THE SPRING FROM WHICH ELIJAH DRENCHED THE ALTAR

For generations the eastern crest of Mount Carmel, near this spring, has been regarded as the place of sacrifice. A white building, conspicuous from afar, now marks the spot. The summit in the background of this picture is the one from which Elijah's servant, looking toward the sea, saw the cloud no bigger than a man's hand.

ELIJAH IN THE MIDST OF THE DESCENDING FIRE
From a painting by Frederick Shields

And he said, "Do it the third time." So they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water.

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said: "Lord God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again."

Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The Lord, he is God! The Lord, he is God!"

And Elijah said to them, "Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape."

So they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them.

Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain." So Ahab went up to eat and to drink.

And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees. And he said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea."

And he went up, and looked, and said, "There is nothing."

Then he said, "Go again seven times."

And it came to pass at the seventh time, that the servant said, "Behold, there riseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand."[22]

And he said, "Go up! say to Ahab, 'Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.'"

Now it came to pass in a little while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord

ELIJAH RUNS BEFORE AHAB'S CHARIOT

From a painting by James J. Tissot

was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

ELIJAH'S FLIGHT FOR HIS LIFE

He Takes Refuge in Mount Horeb

Now when Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword, Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time."

And when he heard this, he rose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there.

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree[23]: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life! for I am not better than my fathers."

And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, an angel touched him, and said to him, "Rise and eat."

And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he ate and drank, and laid him down again.

Then the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, "Rise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee."

And he rose, and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights, to Horeb the mount of God.

He Hears the Still Small Voice

And he came thither to a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said to him, "What doest thou here, Elijah?"

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THE WILDERNESS OF JUDEA

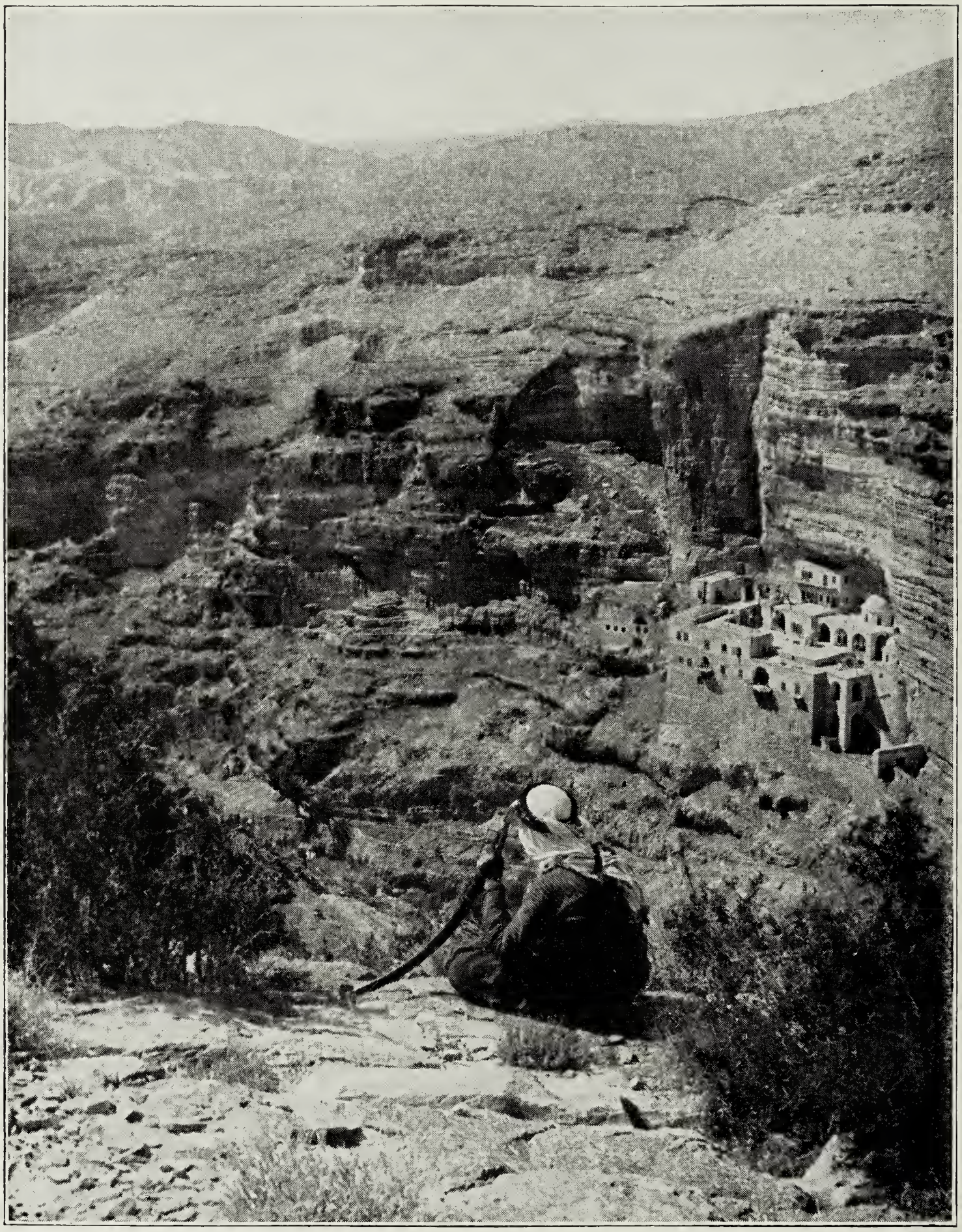
A wilderness, like that pictured here, borders the central table-land of Judea on the east and on the south. The portion here shown is the eastern wilderness. The limestone is soft and chalky. Watercourses easily cut their channels deep, and form in this way wonderful canyons with sides nearly perpendicular. These canyons show clear stratification and a pleasing variety of colors, so that in places the wilderness looks like a miniature Grand Canyon of the Colorado.

On the hill to the left, one can see the countless horizontal trails of sheep that in the spring wander everywhere.

And he said: "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

Then God said, "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord."

And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before



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WILDERNESS OF JUDEA AND MONASTERY OF ELIJAH

The Wady Kelt here reaches its maximum depth. The monastery built against the cliff serves to recall the flight of Elijah when, according to Scripture, he was fed by ravens in this spot; and also the sojourn of Christ during his Temptation. The numerous caves in the rocks have been inhabited by anchorites since early Christian times. The convent buildings now serve as a penitentiary for monks who have offended against the Greek church.

the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went and stood in the entering in of the cave.

Then the Lord said to him: "Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king of Syria; and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy place. And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet will I leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." [24]

Elisha Becomes Elijah's Successor

So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him. And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, "Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee."

And he said to him, "Go back: for what have I done to thee?"

And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave to the people, and they ate. Then he rose, and went after Elijah, and ministered to him.

JEZEBEL'S PLOT AGAINST NABOTH

The King Covets Naboth's Inheritance

Now Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel,[25] near the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. And Ahab

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THE PLAIN OF ESDRAELON

This is the eastern crest of Mount Carmel, the spot marked as the scene of Elijah's sacrifice. Behind us is the great sea, over which appeared the little cloud bearing the long-lost blessing of rain. Below us flows the River Kishon, once reddened with the blood of the priests of Baal. From Elijah's altar all of Esdraelon stretches like a magic carpet eastward. From the place of sacrifice violet hills bound the triangle on all sides. The green crops of the foreground alternate with rectangular patches of brown earth plowed for the new sowing. Ten miles away in a straight line is Jezreel where, from the palace windows, Jezebel watched the distant smoke of the sacrifice.

AHAB AND JEZEBEL

From a painting by T. M. Rooke

Ahab, like a spoiled boy, has retired to his chamber, thrown himself upon his couch and turned his face to the wall. Queen Jezebel here teaches him a different spirit. Her father won his crown by assassination. Why should Ahab let such a trifle as the stubborn will of a subject stand in his way? She is teaching an Israelite the ways of autocrats. Ahab is interested, but not yet convinced.

Incidentally one must notice the imported styles of dress, of architecture and of decoration. Phœnician workmen, borrowing their ideas from Assyria and the islands of the sea, have produced this strange and barbaric palace, quite unlike the simple dwelling places of even the wealthy Israelites. This was another barrier between Ahab and his people.

spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs because it is near my house, and I will give thee a better vineyard for it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money."

But Naboth answered Ahab, "The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to thee."

And Ahab came into his house sullen and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, "I will not give thee the inheritance

AHAB AND NABOTH

From a painting by T. M. Rooke

Naboth is pruning his vines when Ahab appears to bargain for the vineyard. The fact that Ahab has to argue even with his royal robes and crown on, and the fact that Naboth hardly stops his work to listen, are a clear index of the feeling that existed between the democratic Israelite and the tyrant, with his imported notions of the divine right of kings.

of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face; and would eat no food.

But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, "Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no food?"

And he said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite, and said to him, 'Give me thy vineyard for money; or else if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it'; and he answered, 'I will not give thee my vineyard.'"

Then Jezebel his wife said to him, "Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? Rise, and eat food, and let thy heart be merry. I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

Naboth Is Stoned for Blasphemy

So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and to the nobles who were in his city, dwelling with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, "Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. Then set two men, base fellows, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, 'Thou didst blaspheme God and the king.' And then carry him out and stone him to death."[26]

Then the men of his city, even the elders and the nobles who were the inhabitants of his city, did as Jezebel had ordered them, and as was commanded in the letters which she had sent to them. They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people.

And there came in two men, base fellows, and sat before him, and the base fellows witnessed against him in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth blasphemed God and the king."

Then they carried him forth out of the city, and stoned him to death with stones. And they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth is stoned, and is dead."

And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, "Rise! take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead."

STREET OF COLUMNS IN SAMARIA

This view shows the level street that runs around the brow of the Hill of Shomer like a crown. Sixty columns that flank this great street are standing. Others may still be seen lying where they fell. The street is now an olive orchard and a grainfield—an almost literal fulfilment of the words of the prophecy, "I will make Samaria as a heap of the fields and as a planting of the vineyard, and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley."

And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

Elijah Denounces Ahab and Condemns Jezebel

Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying: "Rise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who dwelleth in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to take possession of it. And thou shalt speak to him, saying, 'Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?' and thou shalt speak to him, saying, 'Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.'" And Ahab said to Elijah, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?"

AHAB AND ELIJAH

From a painting by Frank Dicksee

Elijah is here represented as a man of the desert, with his shaggy sheepskin coat, his gourd, his water bottle and his staff. The presence of Jezebel here would indicate that this is the scene in Naboth's vineyard, a suggestion confirmed by the vine in the lower left-hand corner. Ahab clearly shows that he fears the prophet's denunciation. Jezebel is impressed and yet defiant.

Then he answered: "I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to do that which is evil in the sight of the Lord. Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will utterly sweep thee away, and I will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and hast made Israel to sin."

And of Jezebel also spoke the Lord, saying: "The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat."

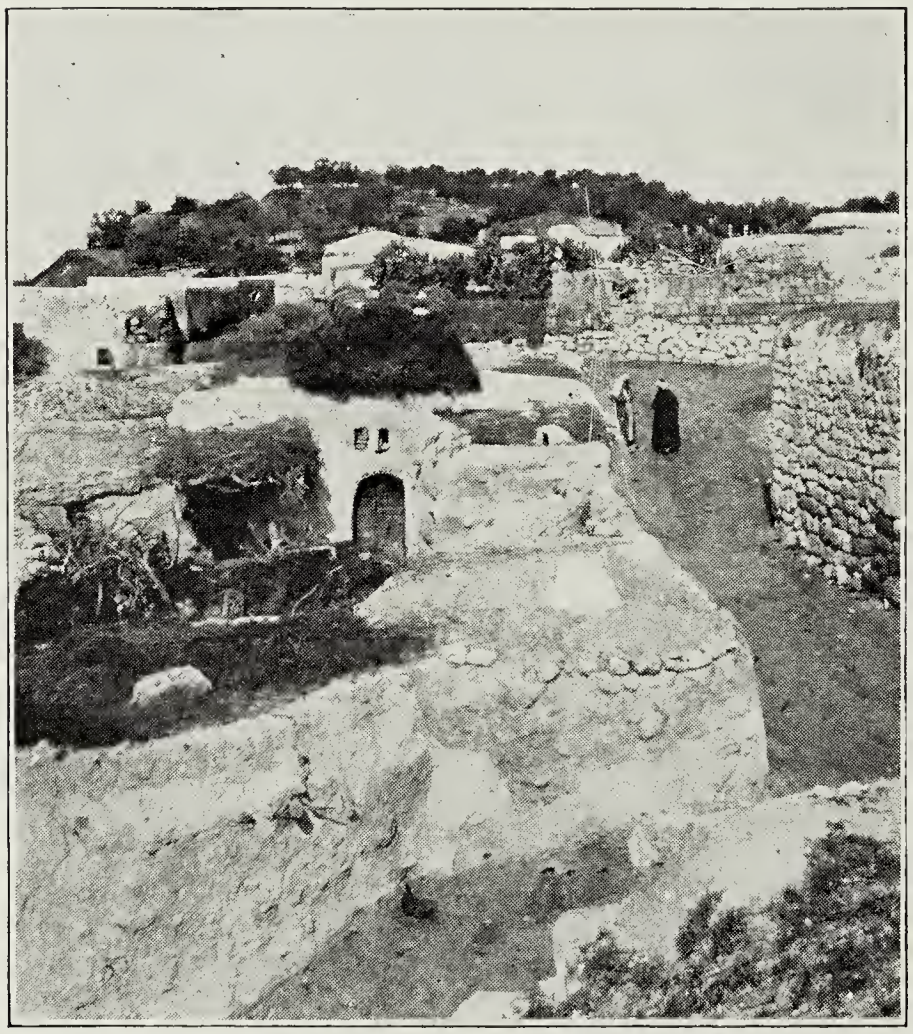
And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.

And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, "Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house."

THE FAREWELL OF ELIJAH

Elisha Makes a Last Request of His Master

And it came to pass, when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said to Elisha, "Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Beth-el."



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IN THE STREETS OF SAMARIA

And Elisha said to him, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee."

So they went down to Beth-el. And the sons of the prophets[27] that were at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said to him, "Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head today?" And he answered, "Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace."

And Elijah said to him, "Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho."

And he said, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." So they came to Jericho.

Then the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said to him, "Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head today?"

And he answered, "Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace."

And Elijah said to him, "Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan."

And he said, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." And they two went on.

Then fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood by Jordan.

And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground.

And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee."

And Elisha said, "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me."

But he said, "Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so to thee; but if not, it shall not be so."

Elijah Disappears in a Whirlwind

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder. And Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.[28]

And Elisha saw it, and he cried, "My father, my father! the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!" And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.

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THE PLAIN OF JERICHO FROM THE ROAD

The carriage road follows in the main the old trail by which "a certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." In the days of the Romans, the waters of the brook were used for irrigation so that this plain blossomed as the rose, and furnished the favorite winter residence of Herod the Great. The palace of Herod lies under the rubbish heaps near the center of the picture. Traces of the great pool in which he caused Mariamne's brother to be drowned are still visible. This is the last steep mile of the road before it enters on the plain below. On the left side is the deep gorge of Wady Kelt, on the farther side of which is visible the path leading up to the Monastery of Elijah.

He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan. And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over.

And when the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho some way off saw him, they said, "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha." And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him.

And they said to him, "Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest perhaps the spirit of the Lord hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley."

But Elisha said, "Ye shall not send."

And when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, "Send." They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not.

And when they came again to him (for he tarried at Jericho), he said to them, "Did I not say to you, 'Go not'?"

The Elijah to Come

It became a fixed belief in Israel that Elijah would return to prepare his people for the Day of Jehovah. This expectation is thus expressed in the Book of Malachi in a passage which couples his name with that of the great founder of the Hebrew commonwealth:

Remember ye the law of Moses my servant
Which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel,
Even statutes and judgments.
Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet,
Before the coming of the great and terrible Day of the
Lord.
And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children,
And the heart of the children to their fathers;
Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

ELIJAH

Also there rose up Elijah the prophet as fire,
And his word burned like a torch;
Who brought famine upon them,
And by his zeal made them few in number.
By the word of the Lord he shut up heaven;
Thrice did he thus bring down fire.

How wast thou glorified, O Elijah, in thy wondrous deeds!
And who shall glory like unto thee?
Who brought down kings to destruction,
And honorable men from their bed;
Who heard rebuke in Sinai,
And judgments of vengeance in Horeb;
Who anointed kings for retribution,
And prophets to succeed after him;
Who was taken up in a tempest of fire,
In a chariot of fiery horses;
Who was recorded for reproofs in their seasons,
To pacify anger before it broke forth into wrath;
To turn the heart of the father unto the son,
And to restore the tribes of Jacob.

Blessed are they that saw thee,
And they that have been beautified with love;
For we also shall surely live.

—*From "The Praise of Famous Men," by Sirach*

ELISHA'S FOUNTAIN NEAR JERICHO

This mighty spring pours out ceaselessly from the foot of the little hill on which ancient Jericho was built. That is why the city was built here. The water is still brackish, even though in the Bible story Elisha "healed" it. The masonry shows how men through the centuries have sought to control and use the spring for irrigation and for mills. Under the rubbish of the hill lie the ruins of old Jericho. Since this picture was taken, the excavators have uncovered large portions of the ancient stronghold.

ELISHA

The Citizen Prophet

ELISHA was very different in both appearance and temperament from his great predecessor. Elijah was a rough, uncouth, unshorn man of the wilderness, impulsive of temper. Elisha was conventional in dress and manner. Elijah was solitary; Elisha was a companionable man who loved society and frequented the cities and the homes of Israel. He was a man of incessant activity, appearing now here and now there in Israel, Judah, Phœnicia, Moab, Damascus, and always with work on hand that furthered his mission. The Bible stories that so charm us testify to his constant spirit of helpfulness, and show a fundamental good will which was, no doubt, the basis of his popularity and of his success as a revolutionist.

Elisha was first and always a revolutionist. The object that lay next his heart was the overthrow of Baal-worship and the iniquities of the house of Ahab. But his instrument was education. His campaign was carried on chiefly by the so-called schools of the prophets, communities of religious enthusiasts that had grown up around the old sanctuaries of Gilgal, Bethel, Samaria and the like. They were religious in the sense that they looked to Jehovah for their inspiration, which showed itself in an uncontrolled ecstasy brought on by music; but they were at bottom patriotic, for their purpose was the overthrow of all that Ahab stood for in the way of tyranny and Baal-worship. These guilds first came to notice in the time of Samuel. Since his day they had grown in numbers and influence, and with the increase of foreign elements in the life of Israel they had become more intense in their opposition. By this time they were hotbeds of revolution—societies whose avowed purpose was to knife every foreign institution. They and the men of Israel who followed them stood as a permanent protest against the corruption, intemperance and luxury which they saw were undermining the nations, and which they felt had been greatly increased under the influence of Jezebel and her Tyrian Baal.

Elisha must be regarded as the moving spirit in all this work. His inspiration had come direct from the great champion of Israel's earlier ideals, who had personally called him from the plow and given him six years of companionship. We can only infer the means he used to educate the people, aside from his patronage of the schools of the prophets. But we know that he was a keen observer of current affairs. When he considered the time ripe for action, he acted. His first deed—and it is most unaccountable—was the instigation of Hazael of Damascus to murder his master Benhadad and seize the throne. He must have seen in this event some

hope of furthering his great ambition to overthrow the house of Ahab, but the sequel proved most disastrous. This same Hazael, forty years later, brought Israel to the very verge of annihilation. His next act comes ten years later. He discovers in the political situation an opportunity to overthrow the reigning king, Joram. He therefore sends one of his young lieutenants to Ramoth-gilead where the armies of Joram were contending with the forces of Damascus for the restoration of the Israelitish cities. Joram had been wounded and was now recuperating in Jezreel. A young cavalry officer named Jehu was in charge of operations. The prophet rushed wildly into a council of war and anointed Jehu king, and Jehu did the rest. The rest consisted of a swift trip to Jezreel, the assassination of King Joram, of the widow Jezebel, of Ahaziah king of Judah, who by chance was visiting his convalescing uncle, of everybody in Jezreel who had any connection by blood or friendship or official position with the house of Ahab, of a group of Judean princes on their way north to visit their royal cousins of Israel, and finally all the priests and worshipers of Baal whom he could assemble in their temple at Samaria. In addition, he caused the elders of Samaria to cut off the heads of the seventy descendants of Ahab in that town and send them to him in baskets. Thus Tyrian Baal-worship was destroyed root and branch, together with the house of Ahab that had introduced it. Jehu's sword accomplished what Elijah's lightning and Elisha's campaign of education had not been able to effect.

Elisha's hold on the hearts of his people is indicated by the number and character of the stories that have come down to us. The Bible gives us the story of the widow's oil by which she was able to pay her debts; of the poisoned food made harmless by Elisha's power; of the recovery of the ax that had fallen into the River Jordan; of the Shunammite's son restored to life after a sunstroke; of the healing of Naaman, the leper from Damascus; and of the three occasions on which he delivered the armies of the cities of Israel from their foes. He seems to have had a genuinely friendly nature. He was at home alike in the country villages and in the courts of kings. He seems to have been the adviser of four different monarchs, probably Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz and Joash. Since he lived forty-five years after the revolution of Jehu, we may well believe that the stories about his helpfulness against the invading Arameans belong to this later period, when, of course, his opposition to the government had ceased.

In all of this he was quite different from Elijah. Elijah seemed to Ahab and Ahaziah to be a personal enemy, one to be hunted and put out of the way; Elisha, though held in awe because of his prophetic powers, was sent for, consulted, and loved alike by rulers and people. His final act shows the old man summoning strength to sit on his couch and assist the young king Joash to shoot "the arrow of the Lord's deliverance."

ELISHA

Persons of the Narrative

Elisha, prophet of Jehovah, successor to Elijah
Jehoram, son of Ahab, king of Israel
Benhadad, king of Syria
Joash, grandson of Jehu, king of Israel
Naaman, captain of the host of Syria, and his wife
Hazael, servant and successor to Benhadad
A widow and her sons
A wealthy woman of Shunem, her husband, and her son
A man of Baal-shalishah
Gehazi, servant to Elisha
A little maid of Israel, servant to Naaman's wife
Sons of the prophets
Courtiers, Syrian soldiers, men of Jericho, servants

Places

Jericho, Gilgal in Ephraim, Shunem, Mount Carmel, Damascus, Samaria, banks of the Jordan, Dothan

Time

Principally in the reign of Jehoram, king of Israel, about 845 B.C.

ELISHA, THE HELPER AND HEALER

Elisha Heals the Spring

AND the men of the city [Jericho] said to Elisha, "Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth; but the water is bad, and the ground barren."

Then he said, "Bring me a new jar, and put salt therein." And they brought it to him.

And he went forth to the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, "Thus saith the Lord, 'I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barrenness.'"

So the waters were healed to this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spoke.

Elisha Helps a Prophet's Wife

Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, "Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord; and the creditor is come to take to him my two sons to be bondmen."

And Elisha said to her, "What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house?" And she said, "Thy handmaid hath not anything in the house, save a pot of oil."

Then he said: "Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbors, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full."

So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, "Bring me another vessel." And he said to her, "There is not a vessel more." And the oil stayed.

Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, "Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children upon the rest."

Elisha Purifies the Pottage

Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him. And he said to his servant, "Set on the great pot, and boil pottage for the sons of the prophets."

And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage: for they knew them not.

So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, "O thou man of God, there is death in the pot." And they could not eat thereof.

But he said, "Then bring meal." And he cast it into the pot; and he said, "Pour out for the people, that they may eat." And there was no harm in the pot.

Elisha Feeds a Multitude

Now there came a man from Baal-shalishah, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of grain in the husk thereof. And he said, "Give to the people, that they may eat."

And his servitor said, "What, should I set this before a hundred men?"

He said again, "Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the Lord, 'They shall eat, and shall leave thereof.'"

So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the Lord.

ELISHA AND A WEALTHY WOMAN OF SHUNEM

"I Dwell Among Mine Own People"

It happened one day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a wealthy woman; and she persuaded him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread.

And she said to her husband: "Behold now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God, that passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither."

It happened one day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there.

And he said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite."

When he had called her, she stood before him. And he said to him, "Say now to her, 'Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? wouldst thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host?'"

And she answered, "I dwell among mine own people."

So he said, "What then is to be done for her?"

And Gehazi answered, "Verily, she hath no son."

Then he said, "Call her."

And when he had called her, she stood in the door. And he said, "About this season, when the time cometh round, thou shalt embrace a son."

But she said, "Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie to thy handmaid."

But, as Elisha had said to her, a son was born.

Elisha Gives a Boy Back to His Mother

Now when the child was grown, it happened one day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. And he said to his father, "My head, my head!" [29]

And the father said to a lad, "Carry him to his mother."

And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died.

And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out.

Then she called to her husband, and said, "Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again."

And he said, "Wherefore wilt thou go to him today? it is neither new moon, nor sabbath." [30]

But she said, "It shall be well."

Then she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, "Drive, and go forward! slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee!"

So she went and came to the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, "Behold, yonder is that Shunammite: run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say to her, 'Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child?'"

And she answered, "It is well."

And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to thrust her away.

And the man of God said, "Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the Lord hath hid it from me, and hath not told me."

Then she said, "Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, 'Do not deceive me'?"

Then he said to Gehazi, "Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thy hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child."

And the mother of the child said, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." And he rose, and followed her.

And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, "The child is not awaked."

Now when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them both, and prayed to the Lord. And he went up and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child: and

ELISHA RAISING THE SON OF THE SHUNAMMITE

From a painting by Sir Frederick Leighton

A striking contrast between the truly beautiful boy and the wrinkled face of the old prophet, who seems to be looking into the very depths of the boy's soul.

the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

And he called Gehazi, and said, "Call this Shunammite."

So he called her. And when she was come in to him, he said, "Take up thy son."

Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.

The Good Woman Recovers Her Land

Then spoke Elisha to the woman, whose son he had restored to life, saying, "Rise and go, thou and thy household, and sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the Lord hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years."

So the woman rose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years.

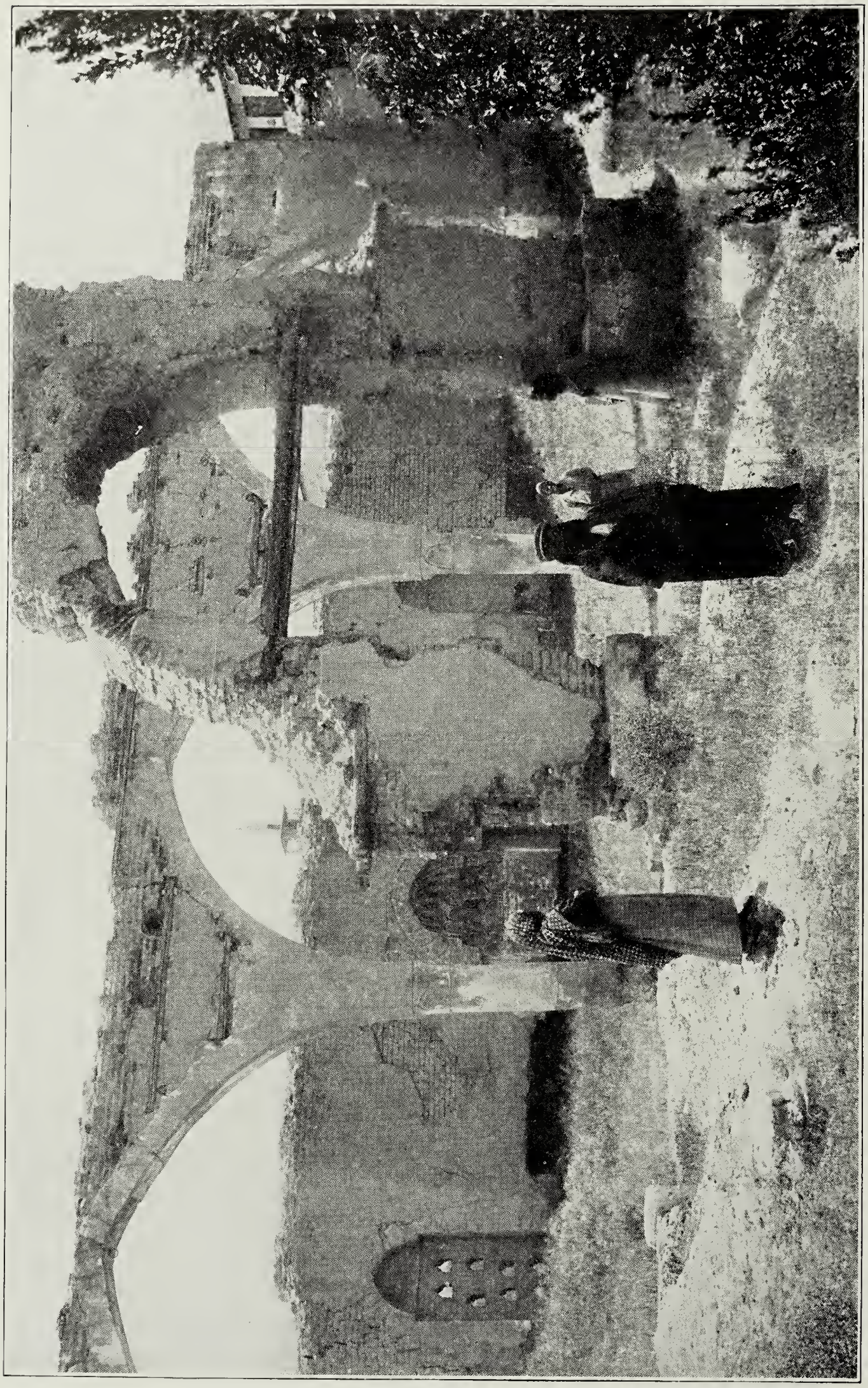
And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land.

Now the king was talking with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, "Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done."

And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored a dead body to life, that, behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land.

And Gehazi said, "My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life."

And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed to her a certain officer, saying, "Restore all that was hers, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now."



RUINS OF THE TRADITIONAL HOUSE OF NAAMAN, DAMASCUS

It is peculiarly fitting that this ancient leper hospital, now so dilapidated, should bear the name of one whose leprosy was healed by the power of God.

ELISHA AND NAAMAN THE SYRIAN

"The Prophet in Samaria Would Recover Him"

Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable; because by him the Lord had given deliverance to Syria.[31] He was also a mighty man in valor, but he was a leper.

And the Syrians had gone out in bands, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife.

And she said to her mistress, "Would God my lord were with the prophet who is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy."

Then one went in, and told his lord, saying, "Thus and thus said the maid, that is of the land of Israel."

And the king of Syria said, "Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel." And he departed.

And he took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.

And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, "Now when this letter is come to thee, behold, I have sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy."

But it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said: "Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send to me to recover a man of his leprosy? but consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me."

And it was so, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, "Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel."

So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariots, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha.

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THE ABANA RIVER

This is the life-giving stream which, according to Naaman the Syrian, is better than all the waters of Israel. Its source is the melting snows of the Lebanons. Through most of its foaming course it is confined to its deep canyon, but on reaching the plain it flings itself abroad in numerous streams, the number still further increased by the hand of man. It waters the thousand orchards of the Damascene oasis and then dies in the face of the Arabian desert. It is one of the few rivers in the world that has no outlet.

"Go, Wash in Jordan Seven Times"

And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean."

But Naaman was angry, and went away, and said: "Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abanah and Pharpar,[32] the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean?"

So he turned and went away in a rage. But his servants came near, and spoke to him, and said, "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, 'Wash, and be clean'?"

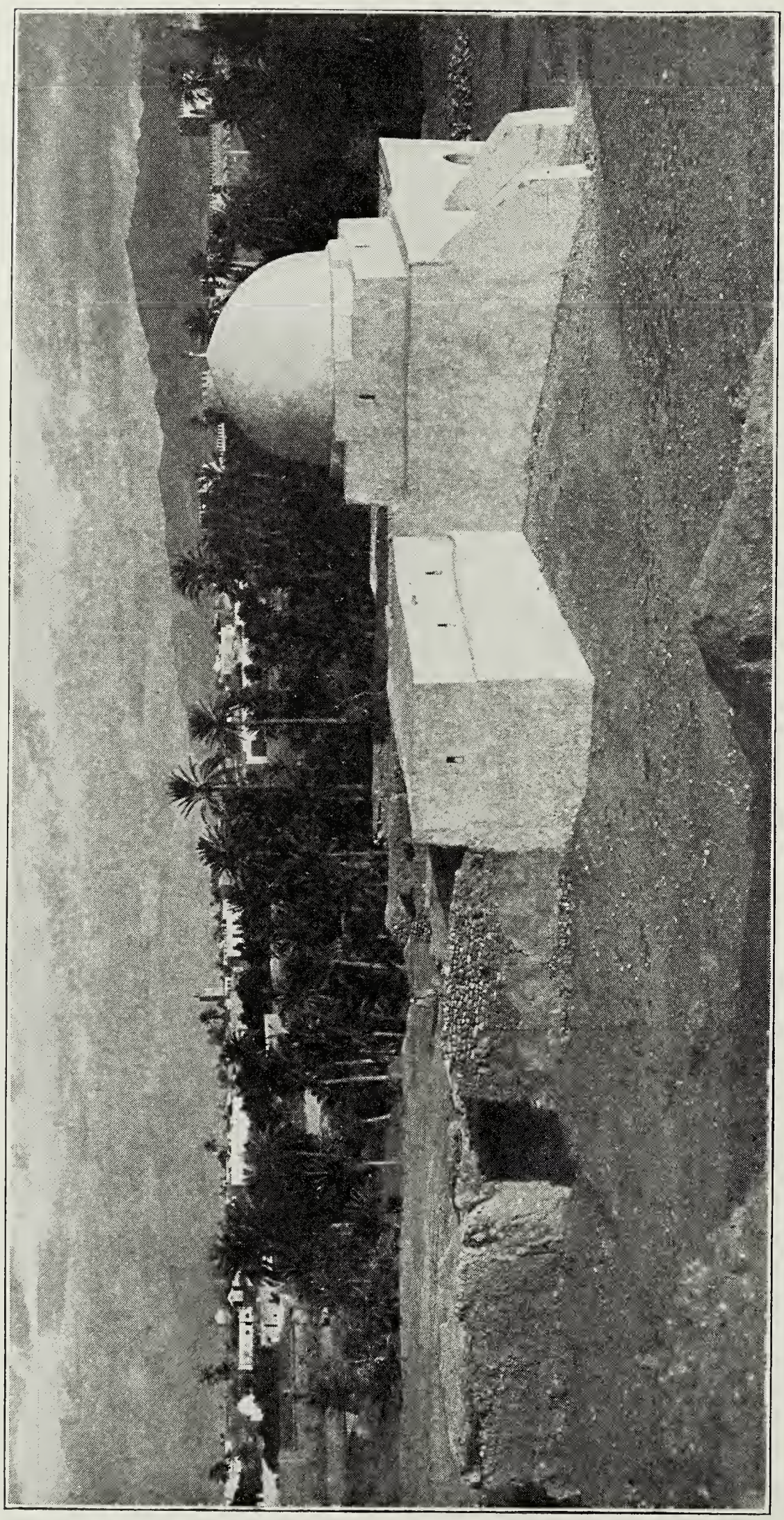
Then he went down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

Naaman Shows His Gratitude

And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a present of thy servant."

But Elisha said, "As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none."

And he urged him to take it; but he refused. And Naaman said, "If not, yet, I pray thee, let there be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth[33]; for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord. In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the



DAMASCUS

Damascus is one of the oldest cities in the world. It is said to have been founded by Uz, the grandson of Shem. It is first mentioned in Scripture in connection with Abraham's steward, who was a native of the place.

house of Rimmon: when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing."

And he said to him, "Go in peace."

Elisha's Servant Pays the Penalty of His Greed

But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, "Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought; but, as the Lord liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him."

So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw him running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, "Is all well?"

And he said, "All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, 'Behold, even now there are come to me from the hill country of Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments.'"

And Naaman said, "Be content, take two talents." And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bore them before him.

Then when he came to the tower, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed.

But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said to him, "Whence comest thou, Gehazi?"

And he said, "Thy servant went nowhere."

And he said to him: "Went not my heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and maidservants? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave to thee, and to thy family forever."

And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.

TOMB OF ELISHA

ELISHA FORESEES THE SORROWS OF ISRAEL

Hazael Becomes King

Now Elisha came to Damascus when Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, "The man of God is come hither."

And the king said to Hazael, "Take a present in thy hand, and go, meet the man of God, and inquire of the Lord by him, saying, 'Shall I recover of this disease?'"

So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, "Thy son Ben-hadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, 'Shall I recover of this disease?'"

And Elisha said to him, "Go, say to him, 'Thou shalt surely recover': howbeit the Lord hath showed me that he shall surely die." And he settled his countenance steadfastly upon him, until he was ashamed: and the man of God wept.

And Hazael said, "Why weepeth my lord?"

And he answered, "Because I know the evil that thou wilt do to the children of Israel: their strongholds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash in pieces their little ones."

Then Hazael said, "But what is thy servant, who is but a dog, that he should do this great thing?"

And Elisha answered, "The Lord hath showed me that thou shalt be king over Syria."

So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, "What said Elisha to thee?"

And he answered, "He told me that thou wouldst surely recover."

And it came to pass on the morrow, that Hazael took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on Ben-hadad's face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead.

HAZAEL'S ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE ELISHA

Elisha Gives His Servant a Vision

Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and he took counsel with his servants, saying, "In such and such a place shall be my camp."

And the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are coming down."

And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and he saved himself there, not once nor twice.

Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said to them, "Will ye not show me which of us is for the king of Israel?"

And one of his servants said, "None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber."

And he said, "Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him."

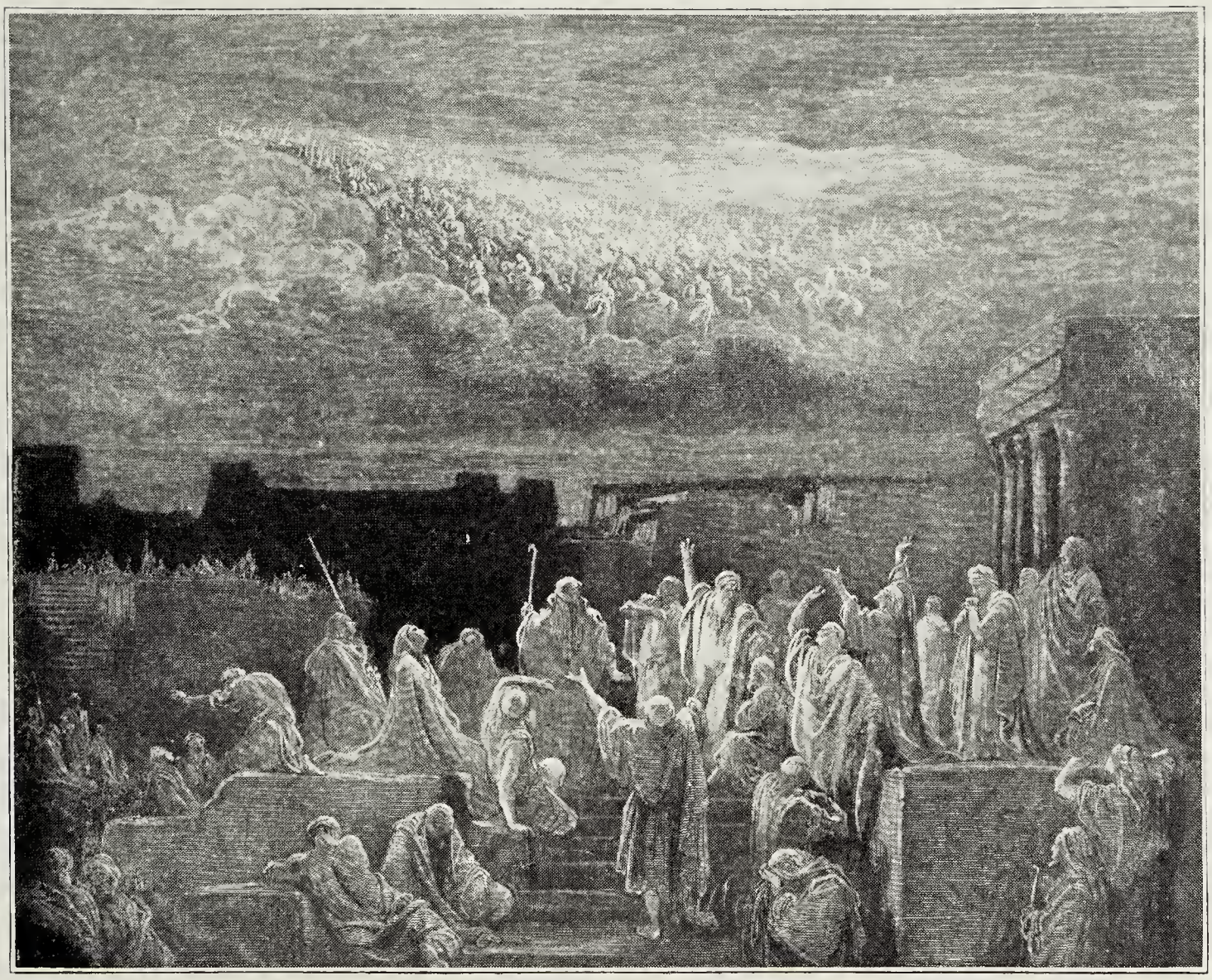
And it was told him, saying, "Behold, he is in Dothan."

Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and surrounded the city. And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, a host with horses and chariots surrounded the city.

And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?"

But he answered, "Fear not: for they that are with us are more than they that are with them."

And Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see." And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw; and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.



THE VISION OF THE ARMY IN THE HEAVENS
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

Elisha Shows Clemency

Now when they came down to him, Elisha prayed to the Lord, and said, "Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness." And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.

And Elisha said to them, "This is not the way, neither is this the city: follow me, and I will take you to the man whom ye seek." But he led them to Samaria.

And it came to pass, when they were come into Samaria, that Elisha said, "Lord, open the eyes of these men, that they may see." And the Lord opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold, they were in the midst of Samaria.

Then Jehoram the king of Israel said to Elisha, when he

Published by arrangement with George D. Sproul *From a painting by Frank Dicksee*

THE ARROW OF THE LORD'S DELIVERANCE

saw them, "My father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them?"

But he answered, "Thou shalt not smite them: wouldst thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow? set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master."

So he prepared great provision for them; and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.[34]

ELISHA'S LAST WORDS TO KING JOASH

Though not loyal to Elisha's religious ideals, King Joash felt genuine grief when the prophet was about to die.

Now Elisha was fallen sick of the sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down to him, and wept over him, and said, "My father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!"

And Elisha said to him, "Take bow and arrows." And he took a bow and arrows.

And he said to the king of Israel, "Put thy hand upon the bow." And he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.

And he said, "Open the window eastward." And he opened it.

Then Elisha said, "Shoot!" And he shot.

And he said, "The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria! For thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them."

Then he said, "Take the arrows." And he took them.

And he said to the king of Israel, "Smite upon the ground." And he smote thrice, and stopped.

But the man of God was angry with him, and said, "Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou

smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice."

And Elisha died, and they buried him.

ELISHA

"Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall."

"Little chamber" built "upon the wall,"
With stool and table, candlestick and bed,
Where he might sit, or kneel, or lay his head,
At night or sultry noontide; this was all
A prophet's need: but in that chamber small
What mighty prayers arose, what grace was shed;
What gifts were given, potent to wake the dead,
And from its viewless flight a soul recall!

And still what miracles of grace are wrought
In many a lowly chamber with shut door,
Where God our Father is in secret sought,
And shows himself in mercy more and more!
Dim upper rooms with God's own glory shine,
And souls are lifted to the life divine.

—*Richard Wilton*

DANIEL

The Fearless Prince of Judah

THE story of Daniel was written down for us in order that it might serve one of the noblest purposes to which a man may dedicate his genius, the raising of the morale of a people in a time of national crisis. The outlook when the book was written was indeed dark. Israel was a minor dependency of the Greek kingdom of Syria. The reigning monarch, Antiochus, had decreed that the Greek faith should become the one religion of his peoples. When he found resistance on the part of the Jews, he issued the edict that the Jewish religion should be annihilated, and he sent armies to accomplish that end. The conflict was fearful. Echoes of it are heard in the seventy-ninth Psalm:

"O Lord, the heathen are come into thine inheritance!
Thy holy temple have they defiled;
They have laid Jerusalem in heaps.
The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be food unto the fowls of the heaven,
The flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.
Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem,
And there was none to bury them!"

To meet this crisis and to strengthen the heroic purpose of the Israelites to put all their trust in God whatever disasters might come, the writer of the Book of Daniel recounted with consummate literary art the story of the man, the fearless prince of Judah, and his three friends, at a time of trial as momentous to their personal lives as was the present calamity to the life of the nation.

The parallels are certainly striking. In the first chapter Daniel and his friends resolve that they will not defile themselves with the king's meat and with the wine which he drank. So in the days of the Maccabees the Jews resolved that they would not eat swine's flesh, which had become with Antiochus the one specific test by which a Jew maintained or rejected the faith of his fathers. The emissaries of Antiochus went into every town of Judah, compelled the inhabitants to offer swine's flesh upon the altar, and to eat pork. If they yielded, their lives were saved; if not, they were killed. But as God blessed Daniel and his friends, so will he bless us if we are true to him.

The second chapter describing King Nebuchadnezzar's dream is a dramatic presentation of the Messianic hope of Israel. By it the great Babylonian overlord is made to realize that his kingdom is but a part of the divine plan, vaster and more significant than the life of any dynasty

or nation, and that the ultimate goal of history is a kingdom of righteousness in which God's will shall be done.

The third chapter pictures, in the story of the trial and deliverance of Daniel's three friends, the sublime faith of Israel that God will be with them in the midst of their burning persecutions, and that their deliverance is certain. This wonderful story was taken over bodily by the early church with its meaning unchanged. On many a Christian sarcophagus we find this incident sculptured, in testimony to the faith of the deceased that God would save him out of the trials of this world and bring him safe to heaven, even as he did the three worthies of old.

The fourth chapter gives Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the trees, and encourages the faithful to believe that kings are but pawns in the all-powerful hand of God; that while for a brief time they may flourish, they may be as easily brought low, and that in the end all men will acknowledge the sovereignty and power of the Almighty.

The story of Belshazzar's feast in the fifth chapter makes us understand that the foundation of God's rule over men is justice; that he weighs kingdoms in the balances, and if they are found wanting, the instrument of justice stands waiting at the gate. God will judge Antiochus as he judged Belshazzar and will give his kingdom to others.

In the sixth chapter the innocent Daniel is cast into the den of lions, —again a symbol of the fierce onslaught of the heathen host against faithful Judah. But God will drive Judah's enemies out of the land, and not only save his people but raise them to a higher eminence than they have yet known.

In the succeeding chapters the author gives us in complex and varied symbols a survey of the course of history previous to his time, and a glimpse into the future when the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed.

Thus, by an appeal to historic example and to the revelations of prophecy, this patriot writer summons Israel to meet the great trial in the spirit of confidence and faith that characterized Daniel of old. How Israel responded, and how once more she enjoyed for a brief period independence and peace under her own king, history has told us. Daniel, the wise and good, was therefore blessed with a double influence. He was a noble example to the men of his time; and when his life story became the theme of a great book, it accomplished a second task far greater than the hero himself had ever dared to hope. Daniel is, thus, himself an illustration of the blessedness he so beautifully describes: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

DANIEL

Persons of the Narrative

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon
Ashpenaz, master of the king's chamberlains
Daniel, surnamed Belteshazzar, of the children of Judah
Hananiah, surnamed Shadrach } *Companions of Daniel*
Mishael, surnamed Meshach } *Companions of Daniel*
Azariah, surnamed Abed-nego } *Companions of Daniel*
Melzar, one of the king's chamberlains
Magicians, astrologers, sorcerers and Chaldeans
Arioch, the king's captain
Princes, governors, etc., of the empire
Multitude assembled in the Plain of Dura
Mighty men of the royal army
Belshazzar, king of Babylon
Princes and women of the royal palace
The queen of Babylon
Darius the Mede, conqueror of the Medo-Persian kingdom
Princes and presidents of the kingdom

Places

The palace in Babylon; the Plain of Dura

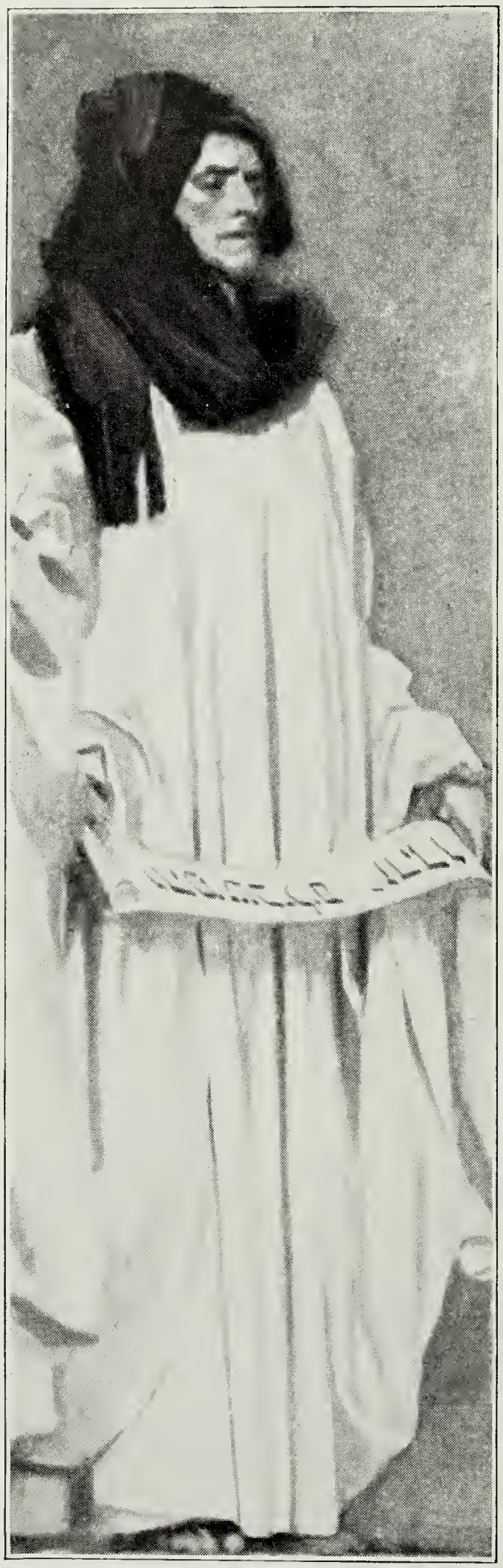
Time

The reigns of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar of Babylon, and Darius of Persia

DANIEL AND HIS COMRADES AT THE COURT OF A GREAT KING

They Are Selected for Positions of Honor

IN the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God. And he brought them to the land of Shinar [Baby-



DANIEL
From a fresco by John S. Sargent

lonia] to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.[35]

And the king spoke to Ashpenaz the master of his chamberlains, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, even of the royal family and of the nobles; children in whom was no blemish, but well-appearing, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and that he should teach them the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.[36]

And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king's food, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king.

Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: to whom the prince of the chamberlains gave names: for he gave to Daniel the name of Belteshazzar; and to Hananiah, of Shadrach; and to Mishael, of Meshach; and to Azariah, of Abed-nego.

The Hebrew Youths Refuse the King's Food

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's food, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the chamberlains that he might not defile himself.

Now God had brought Daniel into favor and tender love with the prince of the chamberlains.

And the prince of the chamberlains said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your food and your drink: for why should he see your faces worse-looking than the children which are of your sort? then shall ye make me endanger my head to the king."

Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the chamberlains had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: "Try thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us herbs to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenance of the children that eat of the portion of the king's food: and as thou seest, deal with thy servants."

So he consented to them in this matter, and tried them ten days. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's food.

Thus Melzar took away the portion of their food, and the wine that they should drink, and gave them herbs.

As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

Now at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, the prince of the chamberlains brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king communed with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding,

that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S FORGOTTEN DREAM

The King's Interpreters Are Baffled

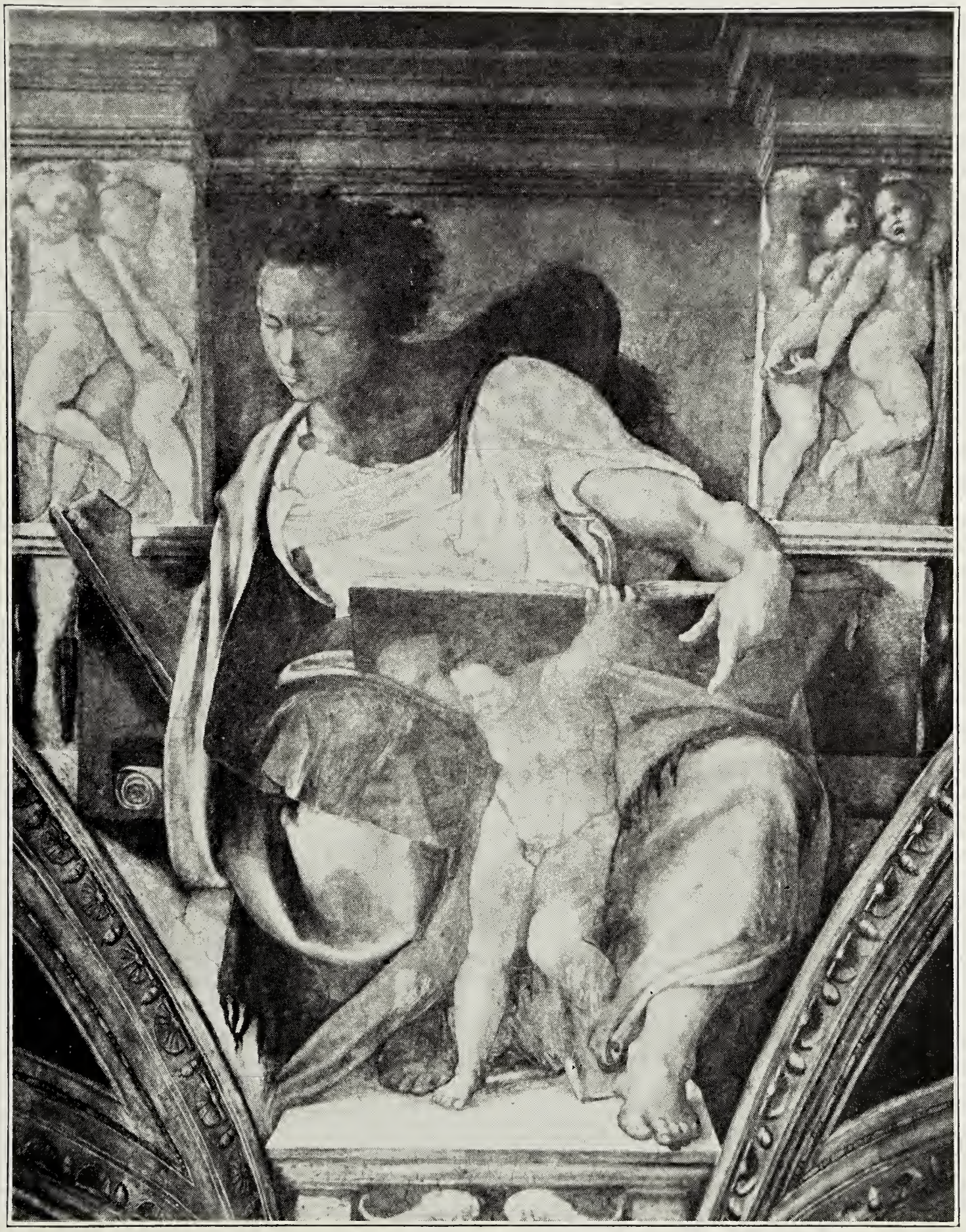
In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep went from him. Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, to show the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king. And the king said to them, "I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream."

Then spoke the Chaldeans to the king in the Syrian language, "O king, live forever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation."

The king answered and said to the Chaldeans: "The thing is gone from me: if ye will not make known to me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill. But if ye show the dream and the interpretation thereof, ye shall receive of me gifts and rewards and great honor: therefore show me the dream and the interpretation thereof."

They answered the second time and said, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation."

The king answered and said: "I know of a certainty that ye would gain time, because ye see the thing is gone from me. But if ye will not make known to me the dream, there is but one law for you; for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can show me the interpretation thereof."



THE PROPHET DANIEL

From a painting by Michelangelo

Daniel is here the thinker and prophet. He has been searching through the Book of Prophecy held before him by the little cherub, and, having thought through the scheme of future history, he is now transcribing it upon the tablet with his right hand. This studiousness, rather than the aspect of rapture, seems quite suited to a prophet whose writings are so enigmatical. Youth and an energetic spirit do not overshadow his intellectual qualities.

The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said: "There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter: therefore there is no king, lord, or ruler, that hath asked such a thing of any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is no other that can show it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh."

For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. So the decree went forth, that the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his companions to be slain.

Then Daniel returned answer with counsel and wisdom to Arioch the captain of the king's guard, who was gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon: he answered and said to Arioch the king's captain, "Why is the decree so urgent from the king?"

Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel. And Daniel went in, and desired of the king that he would give him time, and he would show the king the interpretation.

Daniel Has a Vision

Then Daniel went to his house, and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions: that they would desire mercies of the God of heaven concerning this secret; that Daniel and his companions should not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. Then was the secret revealed to Daniel in a night vision.

Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. Daniel answered and said:

"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever:
For wisdom and might are his:
And he changeth the times and the seasons:
He removeth kings, and setteth up kings:
He giveth wisdom to the wise,
And knowledge to them that have understanding:

He revealeth the deep and secret things:
He knoweth what is in the darkness,
And the light dwelleth with him.

"I thank thee, and praise thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known to me what we desired of thee: for thou hast now made known to us the king's matter."

Daniel Reveals the King's Dream

Therefore Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon: he went and said thus to him, "Destroy not the wise men of Babylon; bring me in before the king, and I will show to the king the interpretation."

Then Arioch brought in Daniel before the king in haste, and said thus to him, "I have found a man of the children of the captivity of Judah, that will make known to the king the interpretation."

The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Art thou able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?"

Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said: "The secret which the king hath demanded can neither the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, nor the soothsayers, show to the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days. Thy dream, and the visions of thy head upon thy bed, are these; as for thee, O king, thy thoughts came into thy mind upon thy bed, what should come to pass hereafter: and he that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, but for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart.

"Thou, O king, sawest, and, behold, a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Whilst thou wast looking, a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and broke them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

The Interpretation Follows

"This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.

"Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thy hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.

"And after thee shall rise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.

"And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

"And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the

toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the children of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to another people; but it shall break in pieces and destroy all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

In this vision the head of gold is of course the Babylonian Empire, while the kingdom never to be destroyed is that of the Son of Man. The other kingdoms are differently interpreted. Some identify the silver with Persia, the brass with Macedon, and the iron with Rome. Modern scholars usually take the silver to be the Median Empire, the bronze that of Persia, and the iron that of the great conqueror, Alexander of Macedon. The feet of mingled iron and clay, according to this interpretation, refer to the mingled strength and weakness that came by the mingling in marriage of the Ptolemies and the Seleucids, successors of the iron Alexander.

Daniel Receives His Reward

Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshiped Daniel, and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odors to him.

The king answered Daniel, and said, "Of a truth it is, that your God is the God of gods, and the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret."

Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province

of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon.

Then Daniel requested of the king, and he set Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, over the affairs of the province of Babylon: but Daniel sat in the gate of the king.

The Kingdom of the Son of Man

In connection with another episode recounted in the Book of Daniel, we read this description of the vision of the final kingdom, "the kingdom never to be destroyed."

I beheld
Till the thrones were cast down,
And the ancient of days did sit,
Whose garment was as white as snow,
And the hair of his head like the pure wool:
His throne was like the fiery flame,
And his wheels as burning fire.
A fiery stream issued
And came forth from before him:
Thousands of thousands ministered to him,
And ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.
The judgment was set,
And the books were opened.

I saw in the night visions,
And, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven
One like the son of man,
And came to the ancient of days,
And they brought him near before him.
And there was given to him dominion,
And glory, and a kingdom,
That all people, nations, and languages, should serve him:
His dominion is an everlasting dominion,
Which shall not pass away,
And his kingdom shall never be destroyed.

IN THE MIDST OF THE FIERY FURNACE
From a painting by Frederick Shields

THE ORDEAL OF THE FIERY FURNACE

The King Sets up a Golden Image

Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits.

He set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon.

Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counselors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together to the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up.

Then a herald cried aloud: "To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set

up: and whoso falleth not down and worshipeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace."

Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of music, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshiped the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up.

Daniel and His Friends Disobey the King

Wherefore at that time certain Chaldeans came near, and accused the Jews. They spoke and said to the king Nebuchadnezzar: "O king, live forever! Thou, O king, hast made a decree, that every man that shall hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, shall fall down and worship the golden image: and whoso falleth not down and worshipeth, shall be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. There are certain Jews whom thou hast set over the affairs of the province of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego; these men, O king, have not regarded thee: they serve not thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Then they brought these men before the king.

Nebuchadnezzar spoke and said to them: "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego? do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that god that shall deliver you out of my hands?"

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego answered and said to the king: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer thee in this matter. If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us, he will deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and out of thy hand, O king. But if not, be it known to thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

The King's Wrath Knows No Bounds

Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his face was hardened against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: therefore he spoke, and commanded that they should heat the furnace seven times more than was usual to heat it. And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

Then these men were bound in their coats, their tunics, their robes, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Therefore, because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spoke, and said to his counselors, "Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"

They answered and said to the king, "True, O king."

He answered and said, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the aspect of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spoke, and said, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the Most High God, come forth, and come hither."

The King Changes His Mind

Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego came forth out of the midst of the fire. And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counselors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was a hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor had the smell of fire passed on them.

Then Nebuchadnezzar spoke, and said: "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God. Therefore I make a decree, that every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill; because there is no other God that can deliver in this way."

Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, in the province of Babylon.

"*Nebuchadnezzar the king, to all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in the earth: Peace be multiplied to you.*

"It hath seemed good to me to declare the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought toward me:

"How great are his signs!
And how mighty are his wonders!
His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
And his dominion is from generation to generation."

THE KING WHO ATE GRASS

The King Dreams a Strange Dream

"I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace. I saw a dream which made me afraid;

and the thoughts upon my bed and the visions of my head troubled me. Therefore made I a decree to bring in all the wise men of Babylon before me, that they might make known to me the interpretation of the dream.

"Then came in the magicians, the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers; and I told the dream before them; but they did not make known to me the interpretation thereof.

"But at the last Daniel came in before me, whose name was Belteshazzar, according to the name of my god, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and before him I told the dream, saying: O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, and no secret troubleth thee, tell me the visions of my dream that I have seen, and the interpretation thereof. Thus were the visions of my head upon my bed: I saw, and, behold, a tree in the midst of the earth; and the height thereof was great. The tree grew, and was strong, and the height thereof reached to heaven, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth. The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was food for all: the beasts of the field had shadow under it, and the birds of the heavens dwelt in the branches thereof, and all flesh was fed from it.

"I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a watcher and a holy one came down from heaven. He cried aloud, and said thus: 'Hew down the tree, and cut off its branches, shake off its leaves, and scatter its fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from its branches. Nevertheless, leave the stump of its roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven: and let his portion be with the beasts in the grass of the earth: let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given to him; and let seven times pass over him. The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand

by the word of the holy ones; to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the lowest of men.'

"This dream I, king Nebuchadnezzar, have seen; and thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but thou art able; for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee." [37]

Daniel Interprets

Then Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, was perplexed for a while, and his thoughts troubled him.

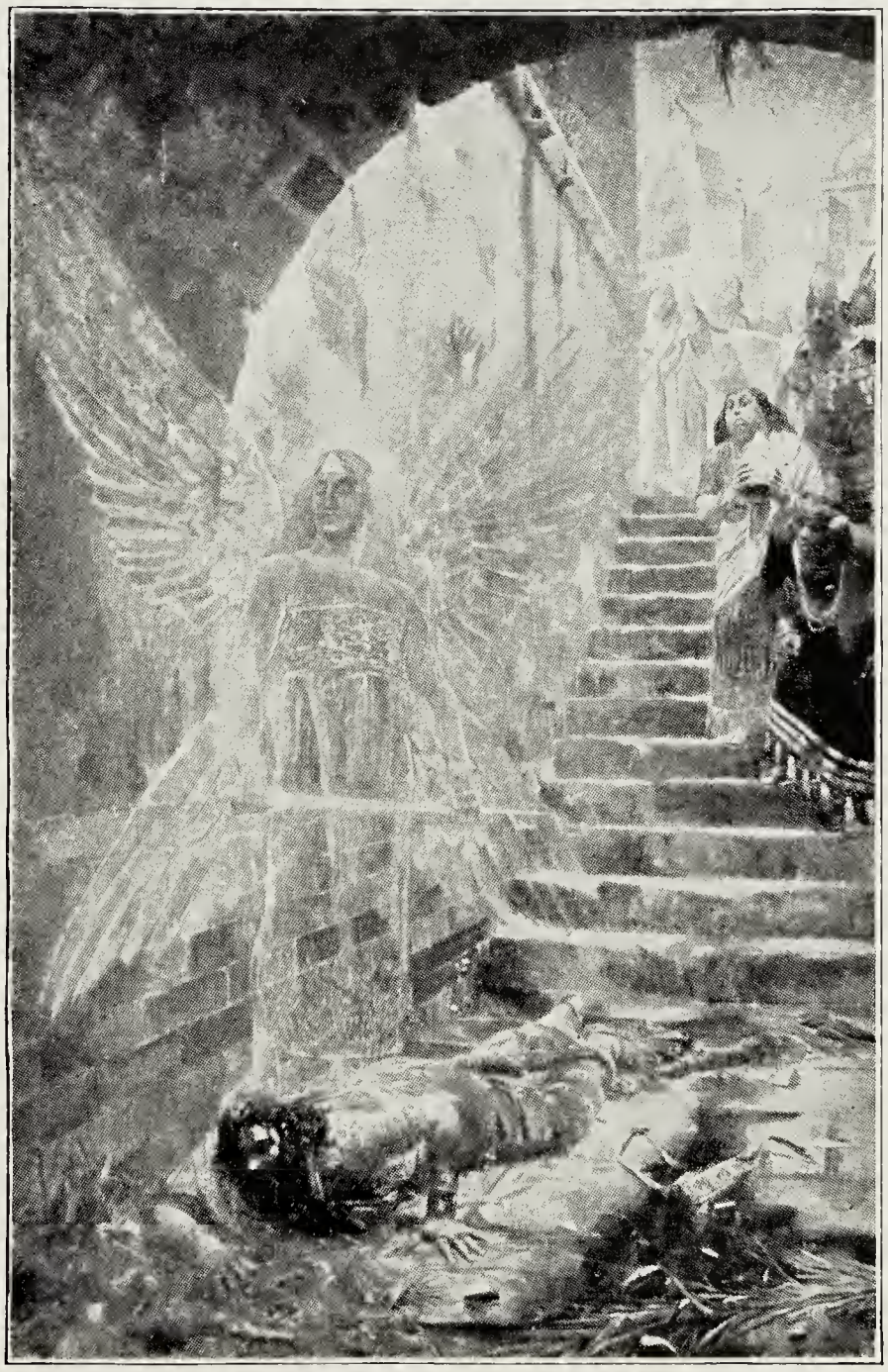
The king then spoke, and said, "Belteshazzar, let not the dream, or the interpretation, trouble thee."

Belteshazzar answered and said: "My lord, the dream be to them that hate thee, and the interpretation thereof to thine enemies. The tree that thou sawest, which grew, and was strong, whose height reached to heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth; whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was food for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the birds of the heavens had their habitation: it is thou, O king, who art grown and become strong; for thy greatness is grown, and reacheth to heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth.

"And whereas the king saw a watcher and a holy one coming down from heaven, and saying: 'Hew down the tree, and destroy it; nevertheless leave the stump of the roots thereof in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass, in the tender grass of the field, and let it be wet with the dew of heaven; and let his portion be with the beasts of the field, till seven times pass over him'; this is the interpretation, O king, and it is the decree of the Most High, which is come upon my lord the king: that thou shalt be driven

from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and thou shalt be made to eat grass as oxen, and shalt be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee; till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.

"And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the roots of the tree; thy kingdom shall be sure to thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule. Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if there may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity."



THE MADNESS OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR

From a painting by Georges Rochegrosse

"Thou shalt be driven from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and thou shalt be made to eat grass as oxen, and shalt be wet with the dew of heaven."

The Dream Comes True

All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of twelve months he was walking in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spoke and said, "Is not this great Babylon, which I have built for the royal dwelling

place by the might of my power, and for the glory of my majesty?'"

While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying: "O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken: 'The kingdom is departed from thee. And thou shalt be driven from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; thou shalt be made to eat grass like oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee; until thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.'"

The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar. And he was driven from men, and ate grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hair was grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

"Then at the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes to heaven, and mine understanding returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth forever;

"For his dominion is an everlasting dominion,
And his kingdom is from generation to generation;
And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing;
And he doeth according to his will in the host of heaven,
And among the inhabitants of the earth;
And none can stay his hand, or say to him, 'What doest thou?'

"At the same time my reason returned to me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honor and brightness returned to me; and my counselors and my lords sought me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me.

"Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven;

"For all his works are truth, and his ways are justice;
And those that walk in pride he is able to abase."[38]

DANIEL

Imperial Persia bowed to his wise sway—
A hundred provinces his daily care;
A queenly city with its gardens fair
Smiled round him—but his heart was far away.
Forsaking pomp and power "three times a day"
For chamber lone, he seeks his solace there:
Through windows opening westward floats his prayer
Toward the dear distance where Jerusalem lay.
So let me morn, noon, evening, steal aside
And shutting my heart's door to earth's vain pleasure
And manifold solicitudes, find leisure
The windows of my soul to open wide
Toward that blest city and that heavenly treasure
Which past these visible horizons hide.

—*Richard Wilton*

THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

Belshazzar Makes a Feast

Belshazzar the king[39] made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem; that the king and his princes, and the women of his palace, might drink therein.

Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king and his princes, and the women of his palace, drank from them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.

Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that his knees smote one against another. The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spoke, and said to the wise men of Babylon, "Whosoever shall read this writing, and show me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom."

Then came in all the king's wise men; but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof. Then was king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonished.

The Queen Suggests that Daniel Be Consulted

Now the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet house: and the queen spoke and said: "O king, live forever! Let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed. There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and showing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will show the interpretation." Then was Daniel brought in before the king.

And the king spoke and said to Daniel: "Art thou that Daniel, who art of the children of the captivity of Judah, whom the king my father brought out of Judah? I have even heard of thee, that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is

found in thee. And now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof; but they could not show the interpretation of the thing. But I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts: now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom."

Daniel Rebukes the King

Then Daniel answered and said before the king: "Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation. O thou king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honor; and because of the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew; and whom he would he kept alive; and whom he would he set up; and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: he was driven from the sons of men; his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven; till he knew that the Most High God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.

"And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thy heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou and thy lords, and the women of thy palace, have drunk wine from them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron. wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know:

THE FEAST OF BELSHAZZAR
From a painting by R. Leinweber

and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified: then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written.

Daniel Interprets the Writing

"This is the writing that was written:

M	U	P
E	L	H
N	E	A
E	K	R
M	E	S
E	T	I
N	E	N

"This is the interpretation of the thing:

"MENE:—God hath numbered thy kingdom:
And finished it!

"TEKEL:—Thou art weighed in the balances:
And art found wanting!

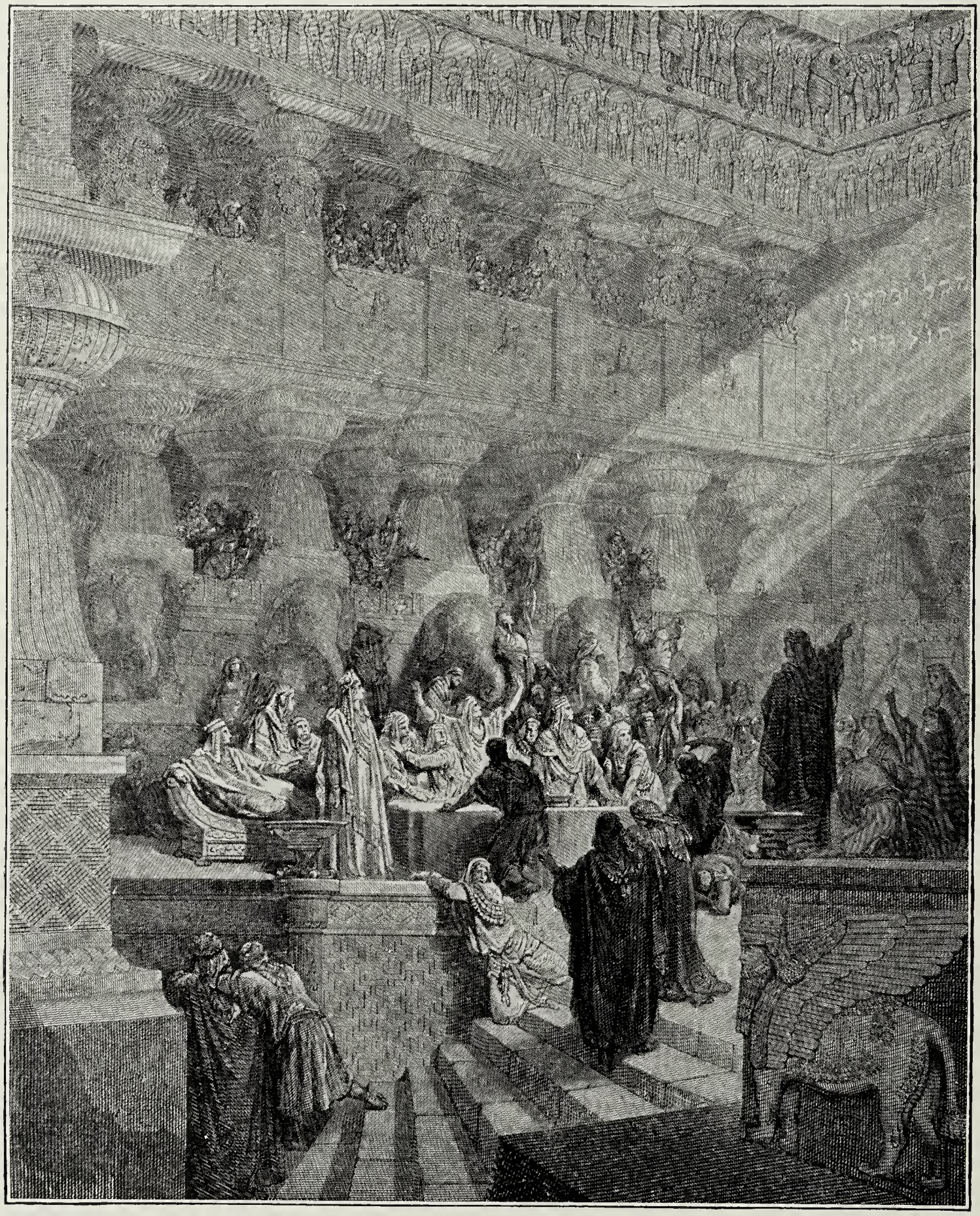
"PERES (or, Upharsin)[40]:—Thy kingdom is divided:
And given to the Medes and Persians!"

Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Mede took the kingdom.

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR

The King was on his throne,
The Satraps throng'd the hall:
A thousand bright lamps shone
O'er that high festival.
A thousand cups of gold,
In Judah deem'd divine—
Jehovah's vessels, hold
The godless heathen's wine.



DANIEL INTERPRETING THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

From a drawing by Gustave Doré

In that same hour and hall,
The fingers of a hand
Came forth against the wall,
And wrote as if on sand:
The fingers of a man—
A solitary hand,
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless wax'd his look,
And tremulous his voice.
"Let the men of lore appear,
The wisest of the earth,
And expound the words of fear,
Which mar our royal mirth."

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill;
And the unknown letters stood
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore;
But now they were not sage,
They saw—but knew no more.

A captive in the land,
A stranger and a youth,
He heard the king's command,
He saw that writing's truth.
The lamps around were bright,
The prophecy in view;
He read it on that night—
The morrow proved it true.

"Belshazzar's grave is made,
His kingdom pass'd away,
He, in the balance weigh'd,
Is light and worthless clay;
The shroud his robe of state,
His canopy the stone.
The Mede is at his gate!
The Persian on his throne!"

—*Lord Byron*

A PLOT OF JEALOUSY

The King's Officers Employ Flattery

It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes, who should be over the whole kingdom: and over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts to them, and the king should have no damage. Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

Then the presidents and the princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find no occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. Then said these men, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God."

Then these presidents and princes assembled together to the king, and said thus to him: "King Darius, live forever. All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counselors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not." Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree.[41]

Daniel Quietly Continues to Worship God

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and, his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three

Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, England

DANIEL IN THE DEN OF LIONS

From a painting by Briton Rivière

times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did before.

Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God. Then they came near, and spoke before the king concerning the king's decree: "Hast thou not signed a decree, that every man that shall ask a petition of any God or man within thirty days, save of thee, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?"

The king answered and said, "The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not."

Then answered they and said before the king, "That Daniel, who is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day."

Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to deliver him. Then these men assembled to the king, and said to the king, "Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, that no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed."

Daniel Is Cast to the Lions

So the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke and said to Daniel, "Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee."

And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel. Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep went from him.

Then the king rose very early in the morning, and went in haste to the den of lions. And when he came to the den,

he cried with a lamentable voice to Daniel: and the king spoke and said to Daniel, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?"

Daniel Triumphs over His Adversaries

Then said Daniel to the king: "O king, live forever! My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt."

Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.

And the king commanded, and they brought those men who had accused Daniel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and broke all their bones in pieces, before they came to the bottom of the den.

Then king Darius wrote to all peoples, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth:

"*Peace be multiplied to you.* I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel:

"For he is the living God,
And he is steadfast forever.
His kingdom shall not be destroyed,
And his dominion shall be even unto the end.
He delivereth and rescueth,
And he worketh signs and wonders
In heaven and in earth,
Who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

RUTH

The Prophetic Romance of a Far-off Day

WHILE the world lasts, and human hearts continue to love and be loved, Ruth and Naomi, in the wonder of their love for each other, will stand as eternal types of pure friendship among women. Where in all the world's vast literature of affection can we find a fuller outflowing of personal devotion expressed in any lovelier abandon of pleading tenderness than in these appealing words of Ruth?

"Entreat me not to leave thee,
Or to return from following after thee;
For whither thou goest, I will go;
And where thou lodgest I will lodge;
Thy people shall be my people,
And thy God my God;
Where thou diest, will I die,
And there will I be buried.
The Lord do so to me, and more also,
If aught but death part thee and me."

How beautiful they are, in the simplicity and directness of their pleading; how true, in the purity and completeness of the love they convey! What had Ruth to give, that she did not give? what to leave, that she did not renounce? Country and kindred and people, even life itself! And all for the joy merely of being with Naomi and sharing with her whatever of joy or sorrow the future might bring.

Love, after all, seeks but one reward,—the joy of nearness to and companionship with the beloved. "Entreat me not to leave *thee*." That is love's only plea.

But, while we shall never cease to take delight in these two women of a far-off day when judges ruled in Israel, we shall miss entirely the purpose and message of the Book of Ruth, to say nothing of its rare poetry and charm, if we go no further in our appreciation than the love of Ruth and Naomi for each other. For the Book of Ruth was written preëminently for the purpose of acquainting Israel with the romance and marriage of Ruth and Boaz, a Moabitess and a Bethlehemite; romance, that was *prophecy in life;* prophecy that found living fulfilment in Obed and Jesse and David, and finally in Jesus, the Christ.

Like all true prophecy, this one was at once a message and a rebuke. It rebuked the narrow and hateful doctrine of separatism so cruelly enforced in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah; and it did so, by setting forth in simple beauty the truth involved in the union of Ruth and Boaz, a

truth eternally evidenced wherever true affection holds uniting and ennobling sway: the truth, namely, that human love given in honor and in honor received, regardless of the barriers of race or clan or creed, is one of God's most effective instruments in building that family on earth that shall be named after his name forever. For Ruth the Moabitess, daughter of a hated race, became through the power of human affection divinely directed, the *ancestress of David*, Israel's most loved and idealized king.

All this the writer of the Book of Ruth has woven into the living texture of his story. There are no obnoxious moralizings in it, no irritating artificialities. All we have is a simple narrative of love, running its quiet course like a living stream through an autumn vale, adding its own loveliness and charm to the ever-varying wonders of woodland and hill and field and sky, setting off and enhancing its own limpid beauty in the lights and shadows, the colors and contours of the landscape through which it flows, moving quietly on and on through all the changing moods of gloom and gladness, till it finds its destiny, its fuller flow, in the deeper waters of the abiding river of love.

The tale is drenched in the poetry of the out-of-doors. The year is at the fall, when solemn glory crowns mountain and hill and dale, and fields heavy-laden with barley and wheat drop contentedly their drooping burdens at every sure swing of the reaper's swift arm. There is toil by day, with the flash of sunlight upon gleaming sickles and falling grain, and the laughter and jollity of reapers vying with each other, and the sad eagerness of the poor, earnestly gleaning behind them. There are the meals by day, bountiful with wholesome country fare and "wine that maketh glad the heart"; and the rest at eventide when moonlight or darkness falls upon quiet fields, and song and story add their refining charms to the general festivities of harvest home. In some such atmosphere as this Ruth and Boaz met, and loved; so that the very name of Ruth has become redolent forever with the fragrance and poetry of autumn and the harvest-tide.

The story, moreover, is emotionally satisfying, running the whole gamut of human experience to its proper climax in "a mother's deep prayer and a baby's low cry":—

> "Famine and want and exile,
> And marriage and death and tears,
> And two women, love-bound, returning
> To widowhood's lingering years;
> Then the glad, sad time of the harvest,
> And a love in maturity's morn;
> The beneficent smile of the Lord over all,
> And the cry of a babe new-born."

And the cry of the babe is the hope of the world; for historic life moves from cradle to cradle, not from cradle to grave; and the Manger is ever the Throne; and Love, the Scepter and Crown.

RUTH

Persons of the Narrative

Elimelech, a man of Bethlehem, sojourning in Moab
Naomi, wife of Elimelech
Mahlon, son of Elimelech and Naomi
Chilion, son of Elimelech and Naomi
Orpah, a woman of Moab, wife of Chilion
Ruth, a woman of Moab, wife of Mahlon
Boaz, a wealthy farmer of Bethlehem, kinsman of Elimelech
Reapers, gleaners
A near kinsman of Elimelech

Place

Bethlehem of Judah; the land of Moab

Time

The days of the Judges

RUTH'S LOYALTY TO NAOMI

NOW it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Beth-lehem-judah[42] went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons, Mahlon [Sickly] and Chilion [Wasting Away], Ephrathites of Beth-lehem-judah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth; and they dwelt there about ten years. And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was bereft of her two sons and her husband.

Then she rose with her daughters-in-law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the

country of Moab how that the Lord had visited his people in giving them bread. Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah.

And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband." Then she kissed them.

And they lifted up their voice, and wept. And they said to her, "Surely we will return with thee to thy people."

But Naomi said, "Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone forth against me."

And they lifted up their voice, and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave to her. And

RUTH AND NAOMI

From a drawing by Isings

she said, "Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back to her people, and to her gods: return thou after thy sister-in-law."

But Ruth said:

"Entreat me not to leave thee,
Or to return from following after thee;
For whither thou goest, I will go;
And where thou lodgest, I will lodge;
Thy people shall be my people,
And thy God my God;
Where thou diest, will I die,
And there will I be buried.
The Lord do so to me,
And more also,
If aught but death part thee and me."

When Naomi saw that Ruth was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking to her.

So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that all the city was moved about them, and the women said, "Is this Naomi?"

And she said to them: "Call me not 'Naomi' [Pleasant], call me 'Mara' [Bitter]: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me 'Naomi,' seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?"

So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, with her, who returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Beth-lehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

BOAZ' KINDNESS TO RUTH

Now Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.

And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of grain after him in whose sight I shall find grace." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter."

So she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and she chanced to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-lehem, and said to the reapers, "The Lord be with you."

And they answered him, "The Lord bless thee."[43]

Then said Boaz to his servant that was set over the reapers, "Whose maiden is this?"

And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said: "It is the Moabitish maiden that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab: and she said, 'I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves': so she came and hath continued even from the morning until now, except that she tarried a little in the house."

Then said Boaz to Ruth: "Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens: let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go to the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn."

Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?"

And Boaz answered and said to her: "It hath fully been showed me, all that thou hast done to thy mother-in-law since the death of thy husband; and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come to a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to take refuge."

BOAZ AND RUTH

From a painting by A. Bida

Then she said, "Let me find favor in thy sight, my lord; because thou hast comforted me, and because thou hast spoken kindly to thy handmaid, though I be not like one of thy handmaidens."

And Boaz said to her, "At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the cup." So she sat beside the reapers; and he reached her parched grain, and she ate, and was satisfied, and left thereof.

And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not; and also pull out some for her from the bundles, and leave it, and let her glean, and rebuke her not." [44]

So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out what she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley. And she took it up, and went into the city; and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that which she had left after she was satisfied.

Then her mother-in-law said to her, "Where hast thou gleaned today? and where hast thou worked? blessed be he that helped thee."

And she showed her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz."

And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead." And Naomi said to her, "The man is near of kin to us, one of our next kinsmen."

Then Ruth the Moabitess said, "He said to me also, 'Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest.'"

And Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, and that they meet thee not in any other field." So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean to the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest[45]; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law.

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THE FIELD OF BOAZ, BETHLEHEM

The only grainfield in the vicinity of Bethlehem is the one shown on the left side of the picture. Everywhere else there are hills and terraces. The tradition that this is the field of Boaz is therefore, no doubt, correct.

The young woman who is standing by the terraced wall is dressed in the costume of the modern Bethlehemite. The distinguishing features are the embroidered yoke and the tall cap ornamented with coins, with the white cloth thrown over it.

Ruth Requests Boaz to do a Kinsman's Part

Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her: "My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley tonight in the threshing-floor. Wash thyself, therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known to the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking. And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do."

And she said to her, "All that thou sayest to me I will do."

So she went down to the floor, and did according to all that her mother-in-law bade her. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was startled, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet. And he said, "Who art thou?"

And she answered, "I am Ruth thy handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thy handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman."

And he said: "Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter: for thou hast showed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a worthy woman. And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I. Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform to thee the part of a kinsman, well: let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not

THE TIRED GLEANER

By Jules Adolph Breton

"She gleaned in the field until even."

do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the Lord liveth. Lie down until the morning."

So she lay at his feet until the morning; and she rose up before one could know another.

And he said, "Let it not be known that a woman came to the threshing-floor." Also he said, "Bring the mantle that thou hast upon thee, and hold it." And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her: and she went into the city.

And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "How hast thou fared, my daughter?"

And she told her all that the man had done to her. And she said, "These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said to me, 'Go not empty to thy mother-in-law.'"

Then said she, "Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not rest, until he have finished the thing this day."

RUTH'S MARRIAGE TO BOAZ

Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat down there[46]: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spoke came by; to whom he said, "Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here." And he turned aside, and sat down. And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, "Sit ye down here." And they sat down.

And he said to the kinsman: "Naomi, who has come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech's: and I thought to inform thee, saying, 'Buy it before them that sit here, and before the elders of my people.' If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it besides thee; and I am after thee."

And he said, "I will redeem it."

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AN ARCHED STREET IN BETHLEHEM

Since the destruction of the Mohammedan quarter by Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt in 1834, Bethlehem has been almost entirely Christian. The people are more cleanly and there is a general atmosphere of business that quite differentiates Bethlehem from a Mohammedan town like Hebron. Bethlehem women wear a distinctive headdress—a veil thrown over a high crown—that gives the street scenes a picturesque quality. Playing children, everywhere in evidence, dart out of the gloom of the frequently vaulted streets into the brilliant sunlight. At an early age, however, most of them begin to work. They drive camels and donkeys, manufacture all kinds of wares, things in wood, tin, copper, iron; they become stone masons, traders and jacks of all trades. But they are never too busy to stop and look at visitors or to hold out the hand for "bakshish."

Then said Boaz, "What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance."

And the kinsman said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: take thou my right of redemption on thee; for I cannot redeem it." (Now this was the custom in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbor: and this was the manner of attestation in Israel.) Therefore the kinsman said to Boaz, "Buy it for thyself." So he drew off his shoe.

Then Boaz said to the elders, and to all the people: "Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day."

And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, "We are witnesses.

"The Lord make the woman who is come into thy house
Like Rachel and like Leah,
Which two did build the house of Israel;
And do thou worthily in Ephrathah,
And be famous in Beth-lehem;
And let thy house be like the house of Perez,
Whom Tamar bore to Judah,
Of the children whom the Lord shall give
Of this young woman."

So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife; and she bore a son. And the women said to Naomi:

"Blessed be the Lord,
Who hath not left thee this day without a near kinsman,

And let his name be famous in Israel.
And he shall be to thee a restorer of thy life,
And a nourisher of thine old age;
For thy daughter-in-law, who loveth thee,
Who is better to thee than seven sons,
Hath borne him."

And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse to it.

And the women her neighbors gave it a name, saying, "There is a son born to Naomi"; and they called his name Obed [Worshiper].

He is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

RUTH

She stood breast high amid the corn,
Clasp'd by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun,
Who many a glowing kiss had won.

On her cheek an autumn flush,
Deeply ripen'd;—such a blush
In the midst of brown was born,
Like red poppies grown with corn.

Round her eyes her tresses fell,
Which were blackest none could tell,
But long lashes veil'd a light
That had else been all too bright.

And her hat, with shady brim,
Made her tressy forehead dim;
Thus she stood amid the stooks,
Praising God with sweetest looks:

Sure, I said, Heav'n did not mean
When I reap thou shouldst but glean.
Lay thy sheaf adown and come,
Share my harvest and my home.

—*Thomas Hood*

ESTHER

"The time is out of joint; O cursed spite
That ever I was born to set it right!"

HOW sad and despairing this wail of Hamlet! Buffeted about by conflicting duties and counter-running loves, lashed on by conscience and baffled by circumstance, thoughtful, moody, irresolute, he moved pathetically in a maze of deepening tragedy, till duty and death coalesced and slew him.

Place over against this "O cursed spite that ever I was born" of Hamlet, these ringing words of Mordecai, "Who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" and we have in the contrast the clue to the tragedy of Hamlet and the victory of Esther. For the time seemed hopelessly "out of joint" for all Israel when Esther, rising in magnificent decision to the challenge of Mordecai, took her life in her hand, and with it the fate of her people; approached the king unbidden, when to do so ordinarily meant death; won his favor, and turned to victory the expected massacre of the Jews, despite the irrevocableness of the king's sealed decree.

The cause of all the trouble seems to have been the age-old hatred between Jews and Amalekites. Beautiful Esther was queen in place of the deposed Vashti, and Mordecai her uncle sat at the king's gate. The scattered Jews, though under Persian rule, were faring pretty well and might now have fared better, had not a certain Haman, an Agagite, risen in power and favor with the king. As chief court favorite he naturally began to receive and enjoy the fawning and the flattery of courtiers and attendants and subjects in general. Of course a proud Jew like Mordecai would on no account do obeisance to a hated Amalekite! And of course an Amalekite in power would not rest until he had crushed the arrogant and hated Jew. Thus it came about that the weak-willed and flattery-loving king was prevailed upon to issue a decree to the entire realm, that on a certain day all loyal subjects everywhere should turn upon what Haman called a troublesome and traitorous sect of people known as Jews, and utterly destroy them.

Consternation and despair spread like a storm cloud over the Jewish sky. Legalized massacre lay ahead of them, with no possible way of escape!

Then it was that Mordecai approached Esther, laid the situation before her, and bade her boldly seek the king and his favor. Appalling as was the woeful plight of her people, she yet shrank in dismay at the thought of venturing unbidden into the presence of the king and thereby courting immediate death. But no sooner did she express her dread of the

issue than Mordecai, placing the inevitable alternatives of the situation before her again, required her to choose the way she would take. If, he argued, the decree were carried out, she would herself perish with her people; she could not possibly escape. If, on the other hand, she sought the king of her own accord, there was indeed the danger of immediate execution; but there was also the chance of the favoring scepter being extended to her, and with it the opportunity to plead her nation's cause. Should she in the face of all this refuse to attempt the rescue of her people, then deliverance would arise from another place; but, he added, "Who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

That final appeal was a master stroke! The response was splendid. With true Jewish piety she urged the observance of a three-day feast, and then with queenly dignity announced her decision: "So will I go in to the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish!" Thus Esther ventured—and won.

How swift and dramatic the whole narrative! Glowing with Oriental extravagance and color, brilliant with contrasting shadows and lights, ominous with subtlety and intrigue, vibrating with love and jealousy, hatred and fear, hope and suspense, and all the flatteries and deceits of a Persian court, progressive in movement and satisfying to Jewish readers in its total outcome, the whole book is a veritable drama of deliverance, founded upon Israel's faith in the sure protection of Jehovah, and turning upon the life venture of Esther in behalf of her endangered race.

Esther indeed shares with Haman the old spirit of vindictiveness and race prejudice. To love one's neighbor and hate one's enemy was counted virtue in her day. We honor her heroism and make full allowance for her provocation. But the standard that seemed praiseworthy to "them of old time" has been forever superseded by the Teacher of Nazareth; and they who follow him seek rather for the final extinguishing of all race hatreds in the all-inclusive brotherhood of the kingdom of God.

ESTHER

Persons of the Narrative

Ahasuerus, king of Media and Persia
Vashti, deposed queen of Ahasuerus
Esther, made queen by Ahasuerus
Mordecai, a Jew, and officer of the court
Haman, a prince, favorite of the king
Zeresh, wife of Haman
Memucan, a courtier of the king
Hegai, a chamberlain, keeper of the women
Shaashgaz, a chamberlain
Bigthan and Teresh, chamberlains, conspirators against the king
Hatach, a chamberlain, messenger of Esther
Harbonah, a chamberlain
Chamberlains, women of the royal house, princes of the kingdom, maidens in attendance, royal couriers

Place

Shushan, or Susa, capital of Persia

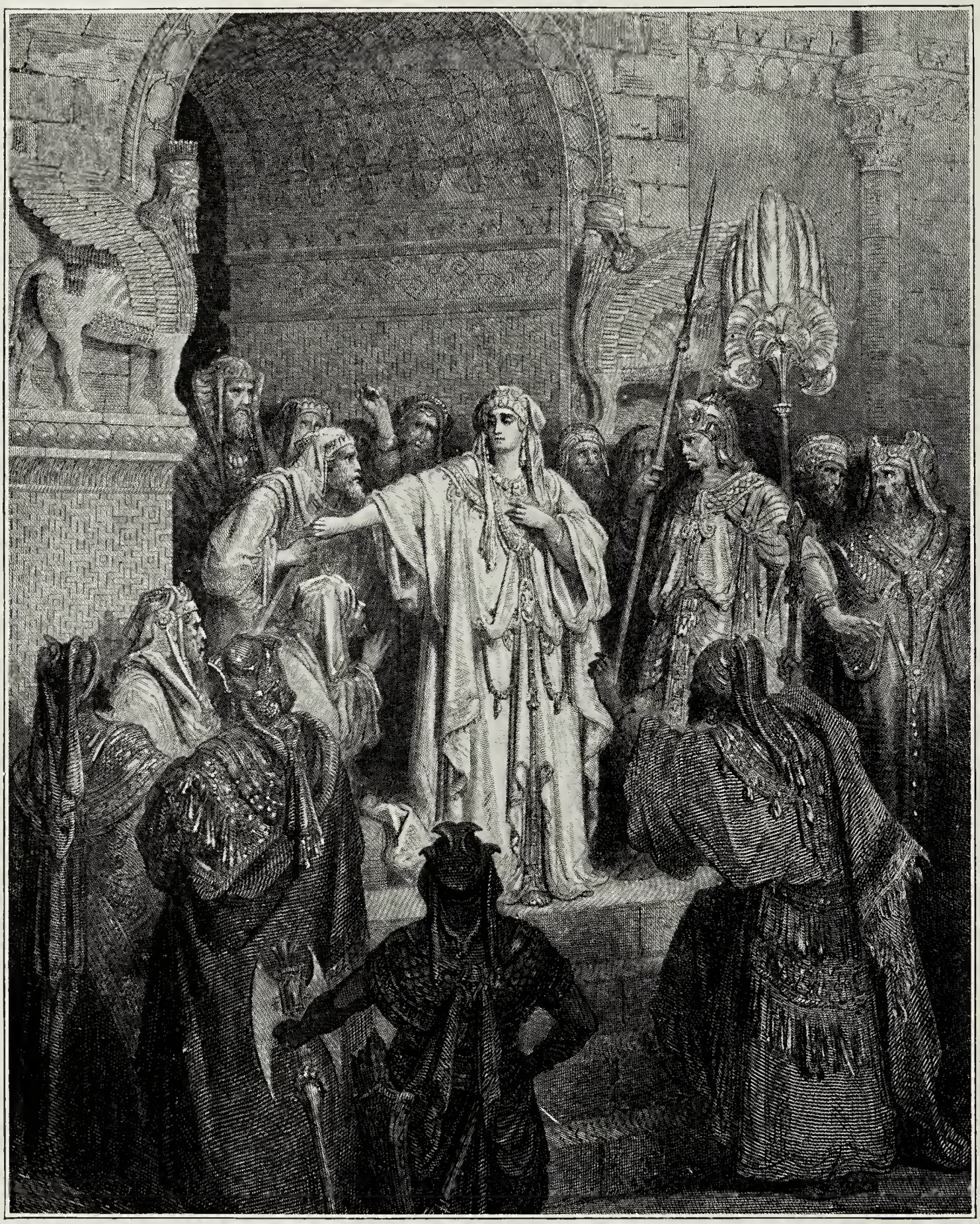
Time

In the reign of Xerxes, 484-465 B.C.

ESTHER'S RISE TO POWER

A Great King Prepares a Pompous Feast

NOW it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus[47] (this is Ahasuerus who reigned from India even to Ethiopia, over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces), that in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the palace,[48] in the third year of his reign, he made a feast to all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him; when he showed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honor of his excellent majesty many days, even a hundred and eighty days.



QUEEN VASHTI

From a drawing by Gustave Doré

And when these days were ended, the king made a feast to all the people that were present in Shushan the palace, both great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden

of the king's palace; where were white, green, and blue hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the beds were of gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black marble. And they gave them drink in vessels of gold (the vessels being diverse one from another), and royal wine in abundance, according to the bounty of the king. Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women in the royal house which belonged to king Ahasuerus.

On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king, to bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to show the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on.

The King Deposes His Queen

But queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.

Then the king said to the wise men, who knew the times, "What shall we do to queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains?"

And Memucan answered before the king and the princes: "Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people that are in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus. For this deed of the queen shall come abroad to all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported, 'The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not.' Likewise shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day to all the king's princes, who have heard of the deed of the queen. Thus shall there arise too much contempt and wrath. If it please the king, let there go a royal commandment from him, and let it be

VASHTI DEPOSED

From a painting by Ernest Normand

written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that it be not altered, 'That Vashti come no more before king Ahasuerus'; and let the king give her royal estate to another that is better than she. And when the king's decree, which he shall make, shall be published throughout all his empire (for it is great), all the wives shall give to their husbands honor, both to great and small."

And the saying pleased the king and the princes; and the king did according to the word of Memucan: for he sent letters into all the king's provinces, into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, that every man should bear rule in his own house, and that it should be published according to the language of every people.

After these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her.

Then said the king's servants that ministered to him: "Let there be fair young maidens sought for the king: and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young maidens to Shushan the palace, to the house of the women, under the custody of Hegai the king's chamberlain, keeper of the women: and let the maiden who pleaseth the king be queen instead of Vashti." And the thing pleased the king; and he did so.

A Beautiful Jewess Becomes Queen

Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, a Benjamite; who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away. And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the

maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.

So it came to pass, when the king's commandment and his decree was heard, and when many maidens were gathered together to Shushan the palace, to the custody of Hegai, that Esther was brought also to the king's house, to the custody of Hegai keeper of the women. And the maiden pleased him, and she obtained kindness of him; and he speedily gave her such things as belonged to her, and seven maidens, who were meet to be given her, out of the king's house: and he removed her and her maids to the best place of the house of the women.

Esther had not made known her people nor her kindred; for Mordecai had charged her that she should not show it. And Mordecai walked every day before the court of the women's house, to know how Esther did, and what should become of her.

Now when every maid's turn was come to go to king Ahasuerus, then thus came every maiden to the king; whatsoever she desired was given her to go with her out of the house of the women to the king's house. And she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz the king's chamberlain: she came to the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she were called by name.

Now when the turn of Esther the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her for his daughter, was come to go to the king, she required nothing but what Hegai the king's chamberlain, the keeper of the women, appointed. And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all them that looked upon her.

So Esther was taken to king Ahasuerus into his house royal in the tenth month, which is the month Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign. And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight

more than all the maidens; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti. Then the king made a great feast to all his princes and his servants, even Esther's feast; and he made a release to the provinces, and gave gifts, according to the bounty of the king.

And when the maidens were gathered together the second time, Mordecai sat in the king's gate. Esther had not yet made known her kindred nor her people, as Mordecai had charged her: for Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, just as when she was brought up with him.

In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of those which kept the door, were angry, and sought to lay hand on king Ahasuerus. And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it to Esther the queen; and Esther informed the king thereof in Mordecai's name. And when inquiry was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.[49]

A MERCILESS PLOT AGAINST THE JEWS

The King's Prime Minister Seeks Revenge

After these things king Ahasuerus promoted Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite,[50] and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him. And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed, and reverenced Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.[51] Then the king's servants, who were in the king's gate, said to Mordecai, "Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?"

Now it came to pass, when they spoke daily to him, and he hearkened not to them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that

he was a Jew. And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath. But he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had made known to him the race of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.

In the first month, that is, the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar.[52]

And Haman said to king Ahasuerus: "There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to tolerate them. If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed; and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries."

And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it to Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy. And the king said to Haman, "The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee."

Then were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded to the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring. And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the booty of them for a prey.

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ESTHER GOES TO PLEAD FOR HER PEOPLE

From a painting by Félix J. Barrias

The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published to all people, that they should be ready on that day. The posts went out, being hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city of Shushan was perplexed.

Mordecai Persuades Esther to Intervene

When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry; and came even before the king's gate: for none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes. So Esther's maids and her chamberlains came and told it her. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved; and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him: but he received it not.

Then called Esther for Hathach, one of the king's chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her, and gave him a commandment to Mordecai, to know what it was, and why it was.

So Hathach went forth to Mordecai to the street of the city, which was before the king's gate. And Mordecai told him of all that had happened to him, and of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them. Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to show it to Esther, and to declare it to her, and to charge her that she should go in to the king, to make supplication to him, and to make request before him for her people.

And Hathach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

Again Esther spoke to Hathach, and gave him commandment to Mordecai: "All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come to the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden scepter, that he may live; but I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days." And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.

Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther: "Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed. And who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"[53]

Then Esther bade them return to Mordecai this answer: "Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise.[54] And so will I go in to the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish."

So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

ESTHER THE DELIVERER OF HER PEOPLE

She Prepares the Way for Her Great Request

Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house. And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favor in his sight:

and the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the scepter.[55]

Then said the king to her, "What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of my kingdom."

And Esther answered, "If it seem good to the king, let the king and Haman come this day to the banquet that I have prepared for him."

Then the king said, "Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said." So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

ESTHER AND AHASUERUS

From a painting by J. Schrader

Esther has been admitted to the king's presence. Ahasuerus has risen from his throne and has extended his golden scepter; but Esther's sudden realization of the task to which she has set her hand has caused her to faint. Her attendants catch her as she falls.[55]

And the king said to Esther at the banquet of wine, "What is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed."

Then answered Esther, and said: "My petition and my request is: If I have found favor in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do tomorrow as the king hath said."

Haman's Pride Takes a Fall

Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai.

Nevertheless Haman controlled himself: and when he came home, he sent and called for his friends, and Zeresh his wife. And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king. Haman said moreover: "Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king to the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and tomorrow am I invited to her also with the king. Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate."

Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends to him, "Let a gallows be made fifty cubits high, and tomorrow speak thou to the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily with the king to the banquet."

And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made.

On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. And it was found written, that Mordecai

had told of Bigthan and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

And the king said, "What honor and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this?"

Then said the king's servants that ministered to him, "There is nothing done for him."

And the king said, "Who is in the court?"

Now Haman had come into the outward court of the king's house, to speak to the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him. And the king's servants said to him, "Behold, Haman standeth in the court."

And the king said, "Let him come in."

So Haman came in. And the king said to him, "What shall be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor?"

Now Haman thought in his heart, "To whom would the king delight to do honor more than to myself?"

And Haman answered the king: "For the man whom the king delighteth to honor, let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: and let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honor, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, 'Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor!'"

Then the king said to Haman, "Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate. Let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken."

Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor!"

And Mordecai came again to the king's gate. But Haman hasted to his house mourning, and having his head covered. And Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his friends everything that had befallen him.

Then said his wise men and Zeresh his wife to him, "If Mordecai be of the race of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him."

And while they were yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and hasted to bring Haman to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

Haman Pays the Penalty of His Treachery

So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen.

And the king said again to Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, "What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom."

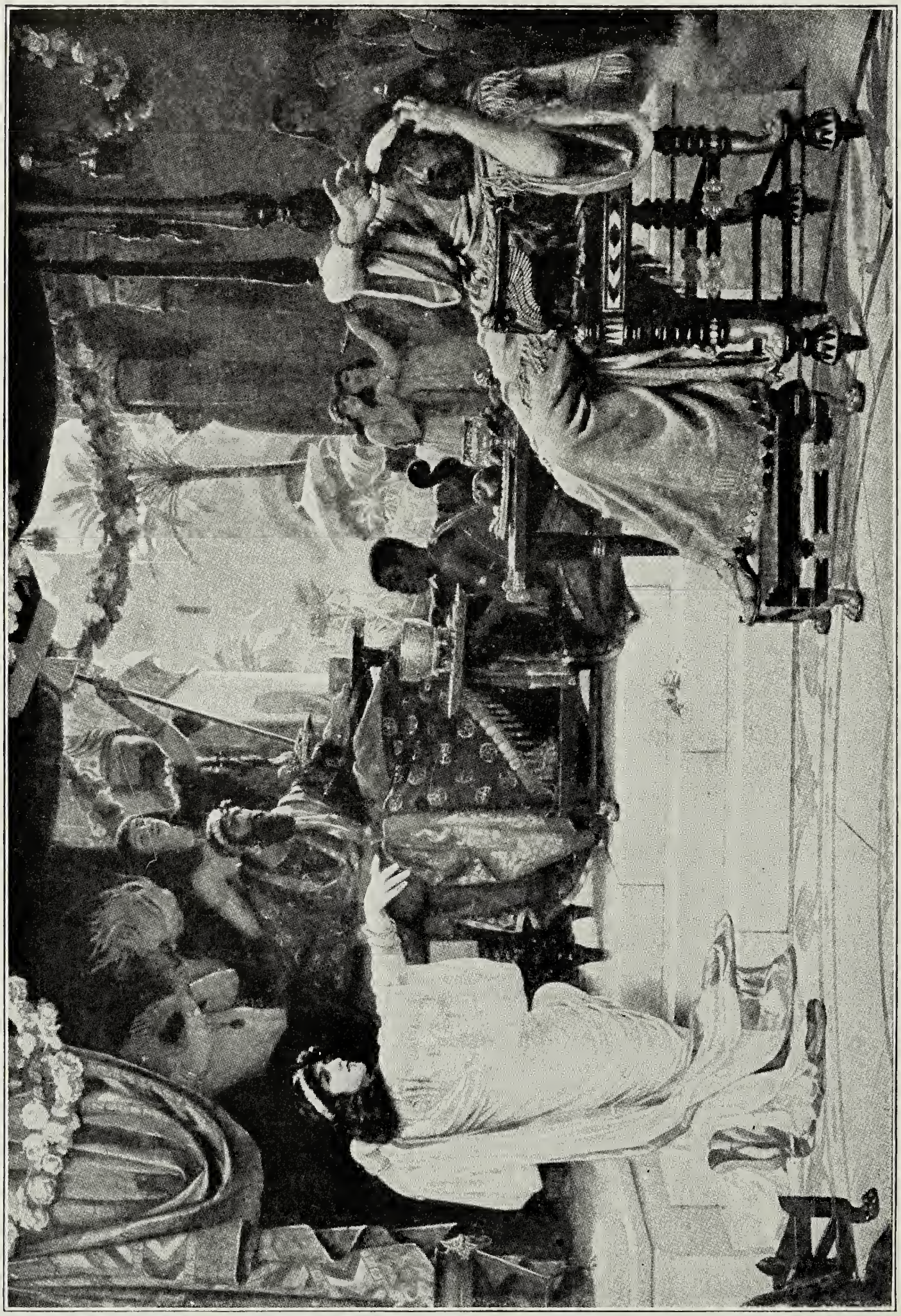
Then Esther the queen answered and said: "If I have found favor in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request: for we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not have compensated for the king's damage."

Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said to Esther the queen, "Who is he, and where is he, that dares presume in his heart to do so?" And Esther said, "The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman."

Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen. And the king rising from the banquet of wine in his wrath went into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.

ESTHER ACCUSING HAMAN
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the couch whereon Esther was. Then said the king, "Will he



ESTHER AND HAMAN
From a painting by Ernest Normand

harm the queen also before me in the house?" As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, "Behold also the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman."

Then the king said, "Hang him thereon."

So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

On that day did the king Ahasuerus give the house of Haman the Jews' enemy to Esther the queen. And Mordecai came before the king; for Esther had told what he was to her. And the king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. And Esther set Mordecai over the house of Haman.

The Jews Are Authorized to Resist Their Enemies

And Esther spoke yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman, and the device that he had devised against the Jews. Then the king held out to Esther the golden scepter.

So Esther rose, and stood before the king. And she said: "If it please the king, and if I have found favor in his sight, and the thing seem right before the king, and I be pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to reverse the letters devised by Haman, which he wrote to destroy the Jews which are in all the king's provinces: for how can I endure to see the evil that shall come to my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?"

Then the king Ahasuerus said to Esther the queen, and to Mordecai the Jew: "Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the gallows, because he laid his hand upon the Jews. Write ye also concerning the Jews, as it pleaseth you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring: for the writing which is written

in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse."

Then were the king's scribes called at that time, in the third month, which is the month Sivan, on the three and twentieth day thereof; and it was written according to all that Mordecai commanded to the Jews, and to the satraps, and the governors, and princes of the provinces which are from India to Ethiopia, a hundred and twenty and seven provinces, to every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, and to the Jews according to their writing, and according to their language.

And he wrote in the name of king Ahasuerus, and sealed it with the king's ring, and sent letters by king's messengers on horseback, and riders on mules, camels and young dromedaries[56]: wherein the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, and to take the booty of them for a prey, upon one day in all the provinces of king Ahasuerus, namely, upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar. A copy of the writing, that the decree should be given out in every province, was published to all the peoples, that the Jews should be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies.

So the king's messengers that rode upon mules and camels went out, being hastened and urged on by the king's commandment; and the decree was given out in Shushan the palace. And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple: and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.

The Jews had light, and gladness, and joy, and honor. And in every province, and in every city, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, the Jews had joy,

TRIUMPH OF MORDECAI
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

and gladness, a feast, and a good day. And many of the people of the land became Jews; for the fear of the Jews was fallen upon them.

The Jews' Enemies Are Slain

Now in the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, on the thirteenth day of the same, when the king's commandment and his decree drew near to be put in execution, in the day that the enemies of the Jews hoped to have rule over them (though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had rule over them that hated them), the Jews gathered themselves together in their cities throughout all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, to lay hand on such as sought their hurt: and no man could withstand them; for the fear of them was fallen upon the people.

All the princes of the provinces, and the satraps, and the governors, and they that did the king's business, helped the Jews; because the fear of Mordecai was fallen upon them. For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went forth throughout all the provinces: for this man Mordecai grew greater and greater.

And the Jews smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and with great slaughter and destruction, and did what they would to them that hated them. And in Shushan the palace the Jews slew and destroyed five hundred men. And the ten sons of Haman the enemy of the Jews they slew; but on the booty they laid not their hand.

On that day the number of those that were slain in Shushan the palace was brought before the king. And the king said to Esther the queen: "The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the king's provinces! Now what is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee; or what is thy request further? and it shall be done."

Then said Esther, "If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shushan to do tomorrow also according to this day's decree, and let Haman's ten sons be hanged upon the gallows."

And the king commanded it so to be done: and a decree was given out in Shushan; and they hanged Haman's ten sons.

And the Jews that were in Shushan gathered themselves together on the fourteenth day also of the month Adar, and slew three hundred men in Shushan; but on the booty they laid not their hand. And the other Jews that were in the king's provinces gathered themselves together, and stood for their lives, and had rest from their enemies, and slew of their foes seventy and five thousand; but on the booty they laid not their hand.

This was done on the thirteenth day of the month Adar; and on the fourteenth day of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness. But the Jews that were in Shushan assembled together on the thirteenth day thereof, and on the fourteenth day thereof; and on the fifteenth day of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness. Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwelt in the unwalled towns, made the fourteenth day of the month Adar a day of gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending gifts one to another.

A Yearly Feast Day Is Ordained

And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters to all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, both far and near, to enjoin them that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly, as the days wherein the Jews had rest from their enemies, and the month which was turned to them from sorrow to gladness, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, and of sending presents one to another, and gifts to the poor.[57]

And the king Ahasuerus laid a tribute upon the land, and upon the isles of the sea. And all the acts of his power and of his might, and the full account of the greatness of Mordecai,

whereunto the king advanced him, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? For Mordecai the Jew was next to king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the good of his people, and speaking peace to all his race.

ESTHER

Sweet Jewish maid, crown'd with a monarch's love,
Thy gentle grace
Sought for no glory, for no sov'reign pow'r,
No pride of place.
"If thy handmaiden hath good favor found
In the king's eyes,
Grant but my people's lives (e'en tho' I be
The sacrifice);
For we are sold, my people and myself,
To cruel foe.
How can I bear to see my kindred's wrong,
My race's woe?"
So thou art honored and thy name shall live
While Time shall be,
O queenly heart! Our homage and our love
We bring to thee.

—*Florence Weisberg*

JONAH

The Compassions that Fail not

FOR true insight into the meaning of divine compassion, Jonah is the great book of the Bible. It vibrates with the missionary spirit; and its message to the Jews and to men of every race was and is that the divine compassion of God enfolds all mankind in its loving arms.

Commissioned to Nineveh, the capital of the most ruthless and the most hated of all Israel's foes, Jonah the prophet attempts to flee to Tarshish "from the presence of the Lord." But wind and wave and sea monster soon teach him the stupidity and futility of such an attempt. As well might he hope to escape from the universe itself as "to flee from the presence of the Lord." Moreover, the devotion and mercy of the pagan mariners throw his own prayerless and vengeful spirit into humiliating relief. And yet overshadowing all is the pursuing compassion of a gracious God that rescues the disobedient and vengeful prophet from death, and recommissions him to his task.

The second scene in this drama presents, in a different contrast, the Ninevites and Jonah. Unable to evade his task, the prophet goes to Nineveh and grimly announces the overthrow of the city in forty days. Not as a warning that might lead to possible escape does he proclaim their approaching downfall; rather as their merited and inexorable doom! If he *must* preach to Nineveh, it shall be of destruction; never of redemption.

But the people of Nineveh were wiser than Jonah, who as a prophet of Israel ought to have understood better the purposes of his God. They "believed God, and proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them"; while Jonah sat himself down on the east side of the city to await and witness its destruction. But "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do to them; and he did it not."

The final scene is between Jonah and God. An angry and rebellious prophet, pettishly desiring to die rather than live, angry over the sparing of Nineveh, and inconsistently sulking over the withering of a frail gourd, —how self-centered, shortsighted, uncontrolled, the prophet! How compassionate, how all-embracing, how calm, the eternal goodness of God, who pleads with Jonah to rise to the lofty vision of One whose mercy overarches both Nineveh and Israel like "the infinite tender sky"; of One to whose unfailing compassion ignorance and helplessness are as the appeal of voiceless prayer.

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EXCAVATIONS AT ANCIENT NINEVEH

This picture gives an idea of the massive character of the buildings in old Nineveh and of the tremendous heaps of débris beneath which they now lie. Being built of sun-dried brick, their disintegration forms enormous hillocks of clay, which are dissolved and compacted by centuries of winter rain and baked by centuries of burning summer heat. The temple of Esagila, one of the most important Babylonian sanctuaries, was perhaps a part of the Tower of Babel. Nineveh must have been about seven and a half miles by three miles in extent. The outlying suburbs with their magnificent palaces made it an imposing city.

JONAH

JONAH'S DISOBEDIENCE AND PUNISHMENT

He Runs Away from Duty

NOW the word of the Lord came to Jonah[58] the son of Amittai, saying, "Rise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me."

But Jonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was likely to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man to his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them.

But Jonah was gone below; and he lay, and was fast asleep. So the shipmaster came to him, and said to him, "What meanest thou, O sleeper? Rise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not."

And they said every one to his fellow, "Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

Then said they to him, "Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; what is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?"

And he said to them, "I am a Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who hath made the sea and the dry land."

Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said to him, "Why hast thou done this?" For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.

MODERN JOPPA

From an engraving

This excellent modern city of closely compacted stone houses is the lineal descendant of one of the most ancient towns in Palestine. It paid tribute to Thothmes III of Egypt in the fifteenth century B.C. In Bible times, though theoretically assigned to the tribe of Dan, it was almost continuously Philistine territory. Twice in Old Testament history it became prominent: first in connection with Solomon, whose rafts of cedar logs were here taken ashore, and next in connection with Jonah, who here embarked on his ill-fated voyage. In New Testament times it comes into prominence with the vision of Peter and the story of Dorcas.

Men have built here continuously, because at this point is practically the only natural harbor on the whole coast of Palestine—and that a wretched little pool of comparatively quiet water behind a barrier of ledges. The great ships of today cannot enter so small a roadstead, but anchor half a mile off the coast in the open sea.

Then said they to him, "What shall we do to thee, that the sea may be calm to us?" For the sea grew more and more tempestuous.

And he said to them, "Take me up and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm to you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you."

Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea grew more and more tempestuous against them. Wherefore they cried to the Lord, and said, "We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee."

So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice to the Lord, and made vows.

JONAH CAST INTO THE SEA
From a drawing by I. Isings

In Distress Jonah Prays

Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God out of the fish's belly, and said:

"I cried by reason of my affliction to the Lord,
And he heard me;
Out of the belly of hell cried I,

And thou heardest my voice.
For thou hadst cast me into the deep,
Into the midst of the seas;
And the floods compassed me about;
All thy billows and thy waves passed over me.

"Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight;
Yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.
The waters enclosed me about, even to the soul:
The deep closed round about me,
The weeds were wrapped about my head.
I went down to the bottoms of the mountains;
The earth with its bars was round me forever:
Yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God.

"When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord:
And my prayer came in to thee,
Into thy holy temple.
They that observe lying vanities
Forsake their own mercy.
But I will sacrifice to thee with the voice of thanksgiving;
I will pay that which I have vowed.
Salvation is of the Lord!"

And the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

JONAH'S SECOND CHANCE

He Misuses His Opportunity

The word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time, saying, "Rise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the preaching that I bid thee." So Jonah rose, and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord.

Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey. And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came to the king of Nineveh, and he rose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying: "Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything: let them not feed, nor drink water: but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God: yea, let

JONAH

From a painting by George F. Watts

The frenzied prophet clad in the scant garments of the ascetic, his only accessory the water gourd, here stretches out his arms in violent denunciation. Behind him, engraven upon the wall, are pictures of the vices of Nineveh—on the highest register, horse racing and betting; on the middle, Mammon with his moneybags, his worshipers groveling before him; on the lowest, the Assyrian Bacchus, his votaries in a drunken heap on the ground.

JONAH PREACHING IN NINEVEH
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will not turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?"

And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do to them; and he did it not.

But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.

And he prayed to the Lord, and said: "I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before to Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil. Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live."

Then said the Lord, "Doest thou well to be angry?"

He Learns a Lesson from the Gourd

So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city. And the Lord prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.

But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered. And it came to pass, when the sun did rise, that God prepared a sultry east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

And God said to Jonah, "Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?"

And he said, "I do well to be angry, even to death."

Then said the Lord: "Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night. And should not I have pity on Nineveh, that great city, wherein

are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?"

JONAH

. . . . . .

Then, in the darkness of the storm that made the midday dim,
The men cast lots, one after one, until it fell on him:
And Jonah rose and spoke to them to cast him overboard
Unto the easing of the storm, the proving of the Lord—
And when they'd cast him overboard a great voice whispered, "Cease!"
And, league on league, the mighty waves fell flat in shining peace.

. . . . . .

Then the men of Tarshish Trade
Took all their little images of ivory and jade,
Took all their helpless little gods of jacinth, bronze, and bone,—
Took quaint-legged, ugly, squatting things of wood and polished stone,
And flung them, scorning, in the sea,—and, as they bubbled down,
One cried, "Come back, if ye be gods,—and, if ye be not, drown!"

. . . . . .

The Mate flung forth his silver god his fathers loved of old,
And from their Captain's fist there sped a flying thing of gold,—
And, men from all the coigns of earth, they bent the knee aboard
To the Mercy and the Majesty, the Glory of the Lord!

—*From "The Chantey of Jonah," by Harry Kemp*

JUDITH

While the story of Judith is not in the Old Testament, its scene, like that of the story of Daniel and his three friends, is laid in the times of King Nebuchadnezzar. It recounts a great deliverance wrought for the Jews by the courage and ingenuity of a Jewish woman. The writer's purpose is evidently not to give the historical facts but rather to stimulate patriotism and resistance to oppression, with strict observance of religious rules, among the Jews of his day.

Persons of the Narrative

Nebuchadnezzar, the great king
Holofernes, his chief captain
Ozias, high priest of Israel
Judith, widow of Manasses, a Jewish lady of wealth and beauty
A maid of Judith
Chabris and Charmis, elders of Bethulia
Young men in charge of the city gate
Assyrian sentinels and soldiers
Bagoas, steward of Holofernes
Servants of Holofernes, guests at his banquet, populace of Bethulia, Israelite soldiers, women of Israel

Places

Bethulia, a city of Israel, near Dothaim (Dothan); the camp of Holofernes, in the plain below the entrance to the Plain of Dothaim.

Time

The ancient days of King Nebuchadnezzar

THE ASSYRIAN THREAT

Holofernes Invades Israel

NEBUCHADNEZZAR swore by his throne and kingdom that he would surely be avenged upon all the coasts of Syria, that he would slay with his sword all Judea, until thou comest to the borders of the two seas.

And Nebuchadnezzar called Holofernes the chief captain of his host, and said to him: "Behold, thou shalt go forth

from my presence, and take with thee men that trust in their strength, to a hundred and twenty thousand footmen, and the number of horses with their riders twenty thousand; and thou shalt go forth against all the west country, because they disobeyed the commandment of my mouth. I will go forth in my wrath against them, and I will give them for a booty; and their slain shall fill their valleys and brooks, and the river shall be filled with their dead. For as I live, and by the power of my kingdom, I have spoken, and I will do this with my hand."

So Holofernes went forth from the presence of his lord, and called all the governors and the captains and officers of the host of Asshur; and he numbered chosen men for the battle, as his lord had commanded him, up to a hundred and twenty thousand, and twelve thousand archers on horseback; and he ranged them, as a great multitude is ordered for the war.

And he took camels and asses and mules for their bagage, an exceeding great multitude; and sheep and oxen and goats without number for their provision; and great store of victual for every man, and exceeding much gold and silver out of the king's house.

And he went forth, he and all his host, on their journey, to go before king Nebuchadnezzar, and to cover all the face of the earth westward with their chariots and horsemen and chosen footmen.

And a great company of sundry nations went forth with them like locusts, and like the sand of the earth: for they could not be numbered by reason of their multitude.

Israel Is in Terror

And every man of Israel cried to God with great earnestness, and with great earnestness did they humble their souls. They, and their wives, and their babes, and their cattle, and every sojourner and hireling and servant put on sackcloth.

And every man and woman of Israel, and the little children, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, fell before the temple, and cast ashes upon their heads, and spread out their sackcloth before Jehovah; and they put sackcloth about the altar; and they cried to the God of Israel earnestly with one consent, that he would not give their babes for a prey, and their wives for a booty, and the cities of their inheritance to destruction, and the sanctuary to profanation and reproach, for the nations to rejoice at.

And the Lord heard their voice, and looked upon their affliction; and the people continued fasting many days in all Judea and Jerusalem before the sanctuary of the Lord Almighty.

Now Holofernes and his host encamped in the valley near Bethulia, by the fountain, and they spread themselves in breadth over Dothaim even to Belmaim, and in length from Bethulia to Cyamon, which is over against Esdraelon.

And there was great weeping of all with one consent in the midst of the assembly; and they cried to the Lord God with a loud voice.

Then Ozias said to them: "Brethren, be of good courage, let us yet endure five days, in the which space the Lord our God shall turn his mercy toward us; for he will not forsake us utterly. But if these days pass, and there come no help to us, I will do according to your words."

And he dispersed the people, every man to his own camp; and they went away to the walls and towers of their city: and he sent the women and children into their houses; and they were brought very low in the city.

Judith Rises to the Occasion

In those days Judith heard thereof, the daughter of Merari. And her husband had been Manasses, of her tribe and of her family, but he died in the days of barley harvest. And Judith was a widow in her house three years and four

months. And she made her a tent upon the roof of her house, and put on sackcloth; and the garments of her widowhood were upon her.

She was of a goodly countenance, and exceeding beautiful to behold; and her husband Manasses had left her gold, and silver, and menservants, and maidservants, and cattle, and lands; and she remained with them. And there was none that gave her an evil word; for she feared God exceedingly.

And she heard the evil words of the people against the governor, because they fainted for lack of water; and Judith heard all the words that Ozias spoke to them, how he swore to them that he would deliver the city to the Assyrians after five days.

And she sent her maid, that was over all things that she had, to call Ozias and Chabris and Charmis, the elders of her city. And they came to her, and she said to them: "Hear me now, O ye rulers of the inhabitants of Bethulia: for your word that ye have spoken before the people this day is not right, and ye have set the oath which ye have pronounced between God and you, and have promised to deliver the city to our enemies, unless within these days the Lord turn to help you. And now who are ye that have tempted God this day, and stand instead of God among the children of men?

"Nay, my brethren, provoke not the Lord our God to anger. For if he be not minded to help us within these five days, he hath power to defend us in such time as he will, or to destroy us before the face of our enemies. But do not ye pledge the counsels of the Lord our God: for God is not as man, that he should be threatened; neither as the son of man, that he should be turned by entreaty. Wherefore let us wait for the salvation that cometh from him, and call upon him to help us, and he will hear our voice, if it please him.

"And now, brethren, let us show an example to our brethren, because their soul hangeth upon us, and the sanctuary and the house and the altar rest upon us."

JUDITH
From a painting by Cristofano Allori

And Ozias said to her: "All that thou hast spoken hast thou spoken with a good heart, and there is none that shall gainsay thy words. For this is not the first day wherein thy

wisdom is manifested; but from the beginning of thy days all the people have known thine understanding, because the disposition of thy heart is good. But the people were exceeding thirsty, and compelled us to do as we spoke to them, and to bring an oath upon ourselves, which we will not break. And now pray thou for us, because thou art a godly woman, and the Lord shall send us rain to fill our cisterns, and we shall faint no more."

And Judith said to them: "Hear me, and I will do a thing, which shall go down to all generations among the children of our race. Ye shall stand at the gate this night, and I will go forth with my maid: and, within the days after which ye said that ye would deliver the city to our enemies, the Lord shall visit Israel by my hand. But ye shall not inquire of mine act; for I will not declare it to you, till the things be finished that I do."

And Ozias and the rulers said to her, "Go in peace, and the Lord God be before thee, to take vengeance on our enemies." And they returned from the tent.

Judith Strengthens Herself with Prayer

But Judith fell upon her face, and put ashes upon her head, and uncovered the sackcloth wherewith she was clothed (the incense of that evening was now being offered at Jerusalem in the house of God); and Judith cried to the Lord with a loud voice, and said: "O God, O my God, hear me also that am a widow. Look upon their pride, and send thy wrath upon their heads: give into my hand, who am a widow, the might that I have conceived. Smite by the deceit of my lips the servant with the prince, and the prince with his servant: break down their stateliness by the hand of a woman. For thy power standeth not in multitude, nor thy might in strong men: but thou art a God of the afflicted, thou art a helper of the oppressed, an upholder of the weak, a protector of the forlorn, a savior of them that are without hope."

Judith Goes to the Enemy

And it came to pass, when she had ceased to cry to the God of Israel, that she rose up where she had fallen down, and called her maid, and went down into the house, in which she was wont to abide on the sabbath days and on her feast days, and pulled off the sackcloth which she had put on, and put off the garments of her widowhood, and washed her body all over with water, and anointed herself with rich ointment, and braided the hair of her head, and put a headdress upon it, and put on her garments of gladness, wherewith she was wont to be clad in the days of the life of Manasses her husband. And she took sandals for her feet, and put her chains about her, and her bracelets, and her rings, and her earrings, and all her ornaments, and decked herself bravely, to beguile the eyes of all men that should see her.

Then she went forth to the gate of the city of Bethulia, and found standing thereby Ozias, and the elders of the city, Chabris and Charmis.

But when they saw her, that her countenance was altered, and her apparel was changed, they wondered at her beauty very exceedingly, and said to her, "The God of our fathers give thee favor, and accomplish thy purposes to the glory of the children of Israel, and to the exaltation of Jerusalem."

And she worshiped God, and said to them, "Command that they open to me the gate of the city, and I will go forth to accomplish the things whereof ye spoke with me." So they commanded the young men to open to her, as she had spoken: and they did so.

And Judith went out, she, and her handmaid with her; and the men of the city looked after her, until she was gone down the mountain, until she had passed the valley, and they could see her no more.

And Judith and her maid went straight onward in the valley: and the watch of the Assyrians met her; and they

took her, and asked her, "Of what people art thou? and whence comest thou? and whither goest thou?"

THE STRATAGEM OF JUDITH

Judith's Beauty Makes the Way Easy

And she said: "I am a daughter of the Hebrews, and I flee away from their presence; because they are about to be given you to be consumed: and I am coming into the presence of Holofernes the chief captain of your host, to declare words of truth; and I will show before him a way, whereby he shall go, and win all the hill country, and there shall not be lacking of his men one person, nor one life."

Now when the men heard her words, and considered her countenance, the beauty thereof was exceeding marvelous in their eyes, and they said to her: "Thou hast saved thy life, in that thou hast hasted to come down to the presence of our lord; and now come to his tent, and some of us shall conduct thee, until they shall deliver thee into his hands. But when thou standest before him, be not afraid, but declare to him according to thy words; and he will treat thee well."

And they chose out of them a hundred men, and appointed them to accompany her and her maid; and they brought them to the tent of Holofernes.

Now there was a concourse throughout all the camp, for her coming was noised among the tents; and they came and compassed her about, as she stood without the tent of Holofernes, until they told him of her. And they marveled at her beauty, and marveled at the children of Israel because of her, and each one said to his neighbor, "Who shall despise this people, that have among them such women? for it is not good that one man of them be left, seeing that if they are let go, they shall be able to deceive the whole earth." And they that lay near Holofernes, and all his servants, went forth and brought her into the tent.

And Holofernes was resting upon his bed under the canopy, which was woven with purple and gold and emeralds and precious stones. And they told him of her; and he came forth into the space before his tent, with silver lamps going before him.

But when Judith was come before him and his servants, they all marveled at the beauty of her countenance; and she fell down upon her face, and did reverence to him: and his servants raised her up. And Holofernes said to her: "Woman, be of good comfort, fear not in thy heart: for I never hurt any that hath chosen to serve Nebuchadnezzar the king of all the earth. And now tell me wherefore thou didst flee from them, and camest to us: for thou art come to save thyself. Be of good comfort, thou shalt live this night, and hereafter: for there is none that shall wrong thee, but all shall treat thee well, as is done to the servants of king Nebuchadnezzar my lord."

Judith Deceives Holofernes

And Judith said to him: "Receive the words of thy servant, and let thy handmaid speak in thy presence, and I will declare no lie to my lord this night. And if thou shalt follow the words of thy handmaid, God shall bring the thing to pass perfectly with thee; and my lord shall not fail of his purposes. For we have heard of thy wisdom and the subtle devices of thy soul, and it hath been reported in all the earth, that thou only art brave in all the kingdom, and mighty in knowledge, and wonderful in feats of war.

"Now our race shall not be punished, neither shall the sword prevail against them, except they sin against their God. And, that my lord be not defeated and frustrate of his purpose, and that death may fall upon them, their sin hath overtaken them, wherewith they shall provoke their God to anger, whensoever they shall do wickedness. Since their victuals failed them, and all their water was scant, they

took counsel to lay hands upon their cattle, and determined to consume all those things, which God charged them by his laws that they should not eat: and they are resolved to spend the firstfruits of the grain, and the tenths of the wine and the oil, which they had sanctified, and reserved for the priests that stand before the face of our God in Jerusalem; the which things it is not fitting for any of the people so much as to touch with their hands.

"Wherefore I thy servant, knowing all this, fled away from their presence; and God sent me to work things with thee, whereat all the earth shall be astonished, even as many as shall hear it. For thy servant is religious, and serveth the God of heaven day and night. And now, my lord, I will abide with thee, and thy servant will go forth by night into the valley, and I will pray to God, and he will tell me when they have committed their sins: and I will come and show it also to thee; and thou shalt go forth with all thy host, and there shall be none of them that shall resist thee. And I will lead thee through the midst of Judea, until thou comest over against Jerusalem; and I will set thy seat in the midst thereof; and thou shalt drive them as sheep that have no shepherd, and a dog shall not so much as open his mouth before thee: for these things were told me according to my foreknowledge, and were declared to me, and I was sent to tell thee."

Holofernes Is Captivated

And her words were pleasing in the sight of Holofernes and of all his servants; and they marveled at her wisdom, and said, "There is not such a woman from one end of the earth to the other, for beauty of face, and wisdom of words."

And Holofernes said to her: "God did well to send thee before the people, that might should be in our hands, and destruction among them that lightly regarded my lord. And now thou art beautiful in thy countenance, and wise in thy

words: for if thou shalt do as thou hast spoken, thy God shall be my God, and thou shalt dwell in the house of king Nebuchadnezzar, and be renowned through the earth."

So he commanded to bring her in where his silver vessels were set, and bade that they should prepare for her of his own meats, and that she should drink of his own wine. But Judith said, "I will not eat thereof, lest there be an occasion of stumbling; but provision shall be made for me of the things that are come with me."

And the servants of Holofernes brought her into her tent, and she slept till midnight, and she rose up toward the morning watch, and sent to Holofernes, saying, "Let my lord now command that they suffer thy servant to go forth to prayer."

And Holofernes commanded his guards that they should not stay her: and she abode in the camp three days, and went out every night into the valley of Bethulia, and washed herself at the fountain of water in the camp. And when she came up, she besought the Lord God of Israel to direct her way to the raising up of the children of his people. And she came in clean, and remained in the tent, until she took her food toward evening.

Holofernes Gives a Feast for Judith

And it came to pass on the fourth day, Holofernes made a feast to his own servants only, and called none of the officers to the banquet. And he said to Bagoas, who had charge over all that he had, "Go now, and persuade this Hebrew woman who is with thee, that she come to us, and eat and drink with us."

So Bagoas went from the presence of Holofernes, and came in to her, and said, "Let not this fair damsel fear to come to my lord, and to be honored in his presence, and to drink wine and be merry with us."

And Judith said to him, "And who am I, that I should gainsay my lord? for whatsoever shall be pleasing in his eyes

I will do speedily, and this shall be my joy to the day of my death."

So she rose, and decked herself with her apparel and all her woman's attire; and her servant went and laid fleeces on the ground for her over against Holofernes, which she had received of Bagoas for her daily use, that she might sit and eat upon them.

And Judith came in and sat down, and Holofernes' heart was ravished with her, and his soul was moved, and he desired exceedingly her company: and he was watching for a time to deceive her, from the day that he had seen her.

So Holofernes said to her, "Drink now, and be merry with us."

And Judith said, "I will drink now, my lord, because my life is magnified in me this day more than all the days since I was born."

And she took and ate and drank before him what her servant had prepared. And Holofernes took great delight in her, and drank exceeding much wine, more than he had drunk at any time in one day since he was born.

Judith Slays Holofernes

But when the evening was come, his servants made haste to depart, and Bagoas shut the tent without, and dismissed them that waited from the presence of his lord; and they went away to their beds; for they were all weary, because the feast had been long. But Judith was left alone in the tent, and Holofernes lying along upon his bed: for he was drunk with wine.

And Judith had said to her servant that she should stand without her bedchamber, and wait for her coming forth, as she did daily: for she said she would go forth to her prayer; and she spoke to Bagoas according to the same words.

Then all went away from her presence, and none was left in the bedchamber, neither small nor great.

JUDITH WITH THE HEAD OF HOLOFERNES

From a painting by Botticelli

Judith is returning from the tent of Holofernes, bearing in one hand the olive branch of peace, in the other the sword that has brought peace. Behind her walks her servant with the dread burden. The enemies of her country, even now engaged in the assault against her city, have not learned of the fate of their general. Judith's face is the face of one who has reluctantly done her duty. She swiftly devoted herself to a mission which her soul abhorred, and this act of self-sacrifice will endear her memory to all generations.

And Judith, standing by his bed, said in her heart: "O Lord God of all power, look in this hour upon the works of my hands for the exaltation of Jerusalem. For now is the time to help thine inheritance, and to do the thing that I have purposed to the destruction of the enemies which are risen up against us." And she came to the rail of the bed, which was at Holofernes' head, and took down his scimitar from thence; and she drew near to the bed, and took hold of the hair of his head, and said, "Strengthen me, O Lord God of Israel, this day."

And she smote twice upon his neck with all her might, and took away his head from him, and tumbled his body down from the bed, and took down the canopy from the pillars. And after a little while she went forth, and gave Holofernes' head to her maid; and she put it in her bag of victuals; and they two went forth together to prayer, according to their custom: and they passed through the camp, and compassed that valley, and went up to the mountain of Bethulia, and came to the gates thereof.

THE HUMILIATION OF ASSYRIA

Judith's Return Is Victorious

And Judith said afar off to the watchman at the gates, "Open, open now the gate! God is with us, even our God, to show his power yet in Israel, and his might against the enemy, as he hath done even this day."

And it came to pass, when the men of her city heard her voice, they made haste to go down to the gate of their city, and they called together the elders of the city. And they ran all together, both small and great, for it was strange to them that she was come: and they opened the gate, and received them, making a fire to give light, and compassed them round about.

Then she said to them with a loud voice, "Praise God, praise him: praise God, who hath not taken away his mercy from the house of Israel, but hath destroyed our enemies by my hand this night." And she took forth the head out of the bag, and showed it, and said to them, "Behold, the head of Holofernes, the chief captain of the host of Asshur, and behold, the canopy, wherein he did lie in his drunkenness; and the Lord smote him by the hand of a woman."

And all the people were exceedingly amazed, and bowed themselves, and worshiped God, and said with one accord, "Blessed art thou, O our God, who hast this day brought to nought the enemies of thy people."

And Ozias said to her: "Blessed art thou, daughter, in the sight of the Most High God, above all the women upon the earth; and blessed is the Lord God, who created the heavens and the earth, who directed thee to the smiting of the head of the prince of our enemies."

Then Judith said to them: "Hear me now, my brethren, and take this head, and hang it upon the battlement of your wall. And it shall be, so soon as the morning shall appear, and the sun shall come forth upon the earth, ye shall take up every one his weapons of war, and go forth every valiant man of you out of the city, and ye shall set a captain over them, as though ye would go down to the plain toward the watch of the children of Asshur; and ye shall not go down. And these shall take up their panoplies, and shall go into their camp, and rouse up the captains of the host of Asshur, and they shall run together to the tent of Holofernes, and they shall not find him: and fear shall fall upon them, and they shall flee before your face. And ye, and all that inhabit Israel, shall pursue them, and overthrow them as they go."

The Assyrians Are Panic-stricken

As soon as the morning arose, they hung the head of Holofernes upon the wall, and every man took up his weap-

ons, and they went forth by bands to the ascents of the mountain.

But when the children of Asshur saw them, they sent hither and thither to their leaders; but they went to their captains and tribunes, and to every one of their rulers. And they came to Holofernes' tent, and said to him that was over all that he had, "Waken now our lord! for the slaves have been bold to come down against us to battle, that they may be utterly destroyed."

Then Bagoas went in, and knocked at the outer door of the tent; for he supposed that he was sleeping. But when none hearkened to him, he opened it, and went into the bed-chamber, and found him cast upon the threshold dead, and his head had been taken from him. And he cried with a loud voice, with weeping and groaning and a mighty cry, and rent his garments. And he entered into the tent where Judith lodged: and he found her not, and he leaped out to his people, and cried aloud, "The slaves have dealt treacherously: one woman of the Hebrews hath brought shame upon the house of king Nebuchadnezzar; for, behold, Holofernes lieth upon the ground, and his head is not on him."

And when the rulers of the host of Asshur heard the words, they rent their coats, and their soul was troubled exceedingly, and there was a cry and an exceeding great noise in the midst of the camp.

And when they that were in the tents heard, they were amazed at the thing that was come to pass. And trembling and fear fell upon them, and no man durst abide any more in the sight of his neighbor, but rushing out with one accord, they fled into every way of the plain and of the hill country. And they that had encamped in the hill country round about Bethulia fled away.

But when the children of Israel heard, they all fell upon them with one accord, and smote them unto Chobai; yea, and in like manner also they of Jerusalem and of all the hill

country came (for men had told them what things were come to pass in the camp of their enemies), and they that were in Gilead and in Galilee fell upon their flank with a great slaughter, until they were past Damascus and the borders thereof. But the residue, that dwelt at Bethulia, fell upon the camp of Asshur, and took booty of them, and were enriched exceedingly. But the children of Israel returned from the slaughter, and got possession of that which remained; and the villages and the cities, that were in the hill country and in the plain country, took much booty: for there was an exceeding great store.

And they gave to Judith Holofernes' tent, and all his silver cups, and his beds, and his vessels, and all his furniture: and she took them, and placed them on her mule, and made ready her wagons, and heaped them thereon.

And all the women of Israel ran together to see her; and they blessed her, and made a dance among them for her; and she took branches in her hand, and gave to the women that were with her. And they made themselves garlands of olive, she and they that were with her, and she went before all the people in the dance, leading all the women: and all the men of Israel followed in their armor with garlands, and with songs in their mouths.

Judith Sings a Song of Thanksgiving

And Judith began to sing this thanksgiving in all Israel, and all the people sang with loud voices this song of praise.

And Judith said:

"Begin to my God with timbrels,
Sing to my Lord with cymbals:
Tune to him psalm and praise:
Exalt him, and call upon his name.
For the Lord is the God that breaketh the battles:
For in his armies in the midst of the people

He delivered me out of the hand of them that persecuted
me.

"Asshur came out of the mountains from the north,
He came with ten thousands of his host,
The multitude whereof stopped the torrents,
And their horsemen covered the hills.
He said that he would burn up my borders,
And kill my young men with the sword,
And throw my nursing children to the ground,
And give mine infants for a prey,
And make of my maidens a prize.

"The Almighty Lord brought them to nought by the hand
of a woman.
For their mighty one did not fall by young men,
Neither did sons of the Titans smite him,
Nor did high giants set upon him:
But Judith the daughter of Merari made him weak
With the beauty of her countenance.
For she put off the apparel of her widowhood
For the exaltation of those that were distressed in Israel;
She anointed her face with ointment,
And bound her hair in a band,
And took a linen garment to deceive him.
Her sandal ravished his eye,
And her beauty took his soul prisoner:
The scimitar passed through his neck;
The Persians quaked at her daring,
And the Medes were daunted at her boldness.

"Then my lowly ones shouted aloud,
And my weak ones were terrified and crouched for fear;
They lifted up their voice, and they were turned to flight.
The sons of damsels pierced them through,

And wounded them as renegades' children;
They perished by the battle of my Lord.

"I will sing to my God a new song:
O Lord, thou art great and glorious,
Marvelous in strength, invincible.
Let all thy creation serve thee:
For thou spakest, and they were made,
Thou didst send forth thy spirit, and it builded them,
And there is none that shall resist thy voice.
For the mountains shall be moved from their foundations
with the waters,
And the rocks shall melt as wax at thy presence:
But thou art yet merciful to them that fear thee.
For all sacrifice is little for a sweet savor,
And all the fat is very little for a whole burnt offering to
thee:
But he that feareth the Lord is great continually.
Woe to the nations that rise up against my race:
The Lord Almighty will take vengeance on them in the day
of judgment."

Judith Ends Her Days Gloriously

Now Judith dedicated all the stuff of Holofernes, which the people had given her, and gave the canopy, which she had taken for herself out of his bedchamber, for a gift to the Lord.

And the people continued feasting in Jerusalem before the sanctuary for the space of three months, and Judith remained with them.

But after these days every one departed to his own inheritance, and Judith went away to Bethulia, and remained in her own possession, and was honorable in her time in all the land. And many desired her, and she increased in greatness exceedingly; and she waxed old in her husband's house,

to a hundred and five years. And she let her maid go free; and she died in Bethulia. And they buried her in the cave of her husband Manasses.

And the house of Israel mourned for her seven days: and she distributed her goods before she died to all them that were nearest of kin to Manasses her husband, and to them that were nearest of her own kindred.

And there was none that made the children of Israel any more afraid in the days of Judith, nor a long time after her death.

JUDITH

Thus through God's grace, that nerved a gentle hand
Not shaped to wield the deadly blade of war,
The tombs and temples of Judea were saved.
And love and honor waited from that hour
Upon the steps of Judith. And the years
Came to her lightly, dwelling in her house
In her own city; lightly came the years,
Touching the raven tresses with their snow.
Many desired her, but she put them by
With sweet denial: when Manasseh slept
In his strait sepulcher, then slept her heart.
And there beside him in the barley-field
Nigh unto Dothaim they buried her.

—*From "Judith and Holofernes," by T. B. Aldrich*

STORIES OF MARTYRDOM

This account of Eleazar and the seven brothers who suffered torture and death rather than refrain from the ceremonials of their religion, belongs to the days of the tyrant Antiochus IV, whose infamies inspired the Maccabees to free Israel. The sympathy of the mother with the unflinching courage of her seven sons is a characteristic Jewish touch. Faith in personal immortality is here very clearly expressed.

AN OLD HERO WHO REFUSES TO COMMIT SACRILEGE

THE king sent forth an old man of Athens to compel the Jews to depart from the laws of their fathers, and not to live after the laws of God; and also to pollute the sanctuary in Jerusalem, and to call it by the name of Jupiter Olympus, and to call the sanctuary in Gerizim by the name of Jupiter, the protector of strangers. But sore and utterly grievous was the visitation of this evil. For the temple was filled with riot and revelings by the heathen, who brought inside things that were not befitting; and the place of sacrifice was filled with those abominable things which had been prohibited by the laws. And a man could neither keep the sabbath, nor observe the feasts of the fathers, nor so much as confess himself to be a Jew. Every month they were led along with bitter constraint to eat of the sacrifices; and when the feast of Bacchus came, they were compelled to go in procession in honor of Bacchus, wearing wreaths of ivy.

I beseech therefore those that read this book, that they be not discouraged because of the calamities, but account that these punishments were not for the destruction, but for the chastening of our race. Howbeit let this that we have spoken suffice to put you in remembrance; after these few words we must come to the narrative.

Eleazar, one of the principal scribes, a man already well stricken in years, and of a noble countenance, was compelled to open his mouth to eat swine's flesh. But he, welcoming death with renown rather than life with pollution, advanced of his own accord to the instrument of torture, but first spat forth the flesh, coming forward as men ought to come that are resolute to repel such things as not even for the natural love of life is it lawful to taste.

But they that had the charge of that forbidden sacrificial feast took the man aside, for the acquaintance which of old times they had with him, and privately besought him to bring flesh of his own providing, such as was befitting for him to use, and to make as if he did eat of the flesh from the sacrifice, as had been commanded by the king; that by so doing he might be delivered from death, and for his ancient friendship with them might be treated kindly.

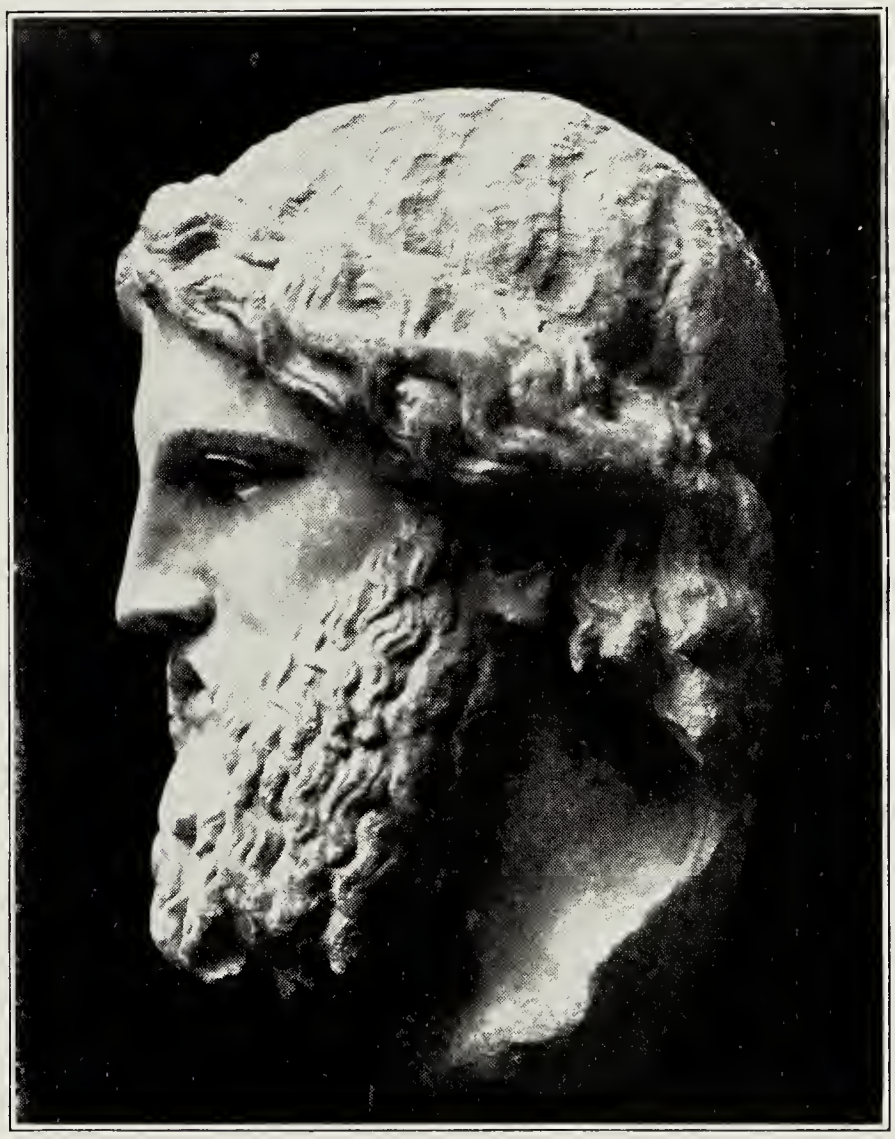
But he, having formed a high resolve, and one that became his years, and the dignity of old age, and the gray hairs which he had reached with honor, and his excellent education from a child, or rather that became the holy laws of God's ordaining, declared his mind accordingly, bidding them quickly send him to Hades. "For it becometh not our years to dissemble," said he, "that through this many of the young should suppose that Eleazar, the man of fourscore years and ten, had gone over to an alien religion; and so they, by reason of my dissimulation, and for the sake of this brief and momentary life, should be led astray because of me, and thus I get to myself a pollution and a stain of mine old age. For even if for the present time I shall remove from me the punishment of men, yet shall I not escape the hands of the Almighty, either living or dead. Wherefore, by manfully parting with my life now, I will show myself worthy of mine old age, and leave behind a noble example to the young to die willingly and nobly a glorious death for the reverend and holy laws." And when he had said these words, he went

straightway to the instrument of torture. So this man died, an example of nobleness and a memorial of virtue, not only to the young, but also to the great body of his nation.

THE CRUEL TRIAL OF SEVEN LOYAL BROTHERS

And it came to pass that seven brethren also with their mother were at the king's command taken and shamefully handled with scourges and cords, to compel them to taste of the abominable swine's flesh. But one of them made himself the spokesman and said, "What wouldst thou ask and learn of us? for we are ready to die rather than transgress the laws of our fathers."

And the king fell into a rage, and commanded to heat pans and caldrons: and he commanded to cut out the tongue of him that had been their spokesman, the rest of his brethren and his mother looking on. And when he was maimed, the king commanded to bring him to the fire.



THE OLYMPIAN ZEUS

From a photograph, Boston Museum of Fine Arts

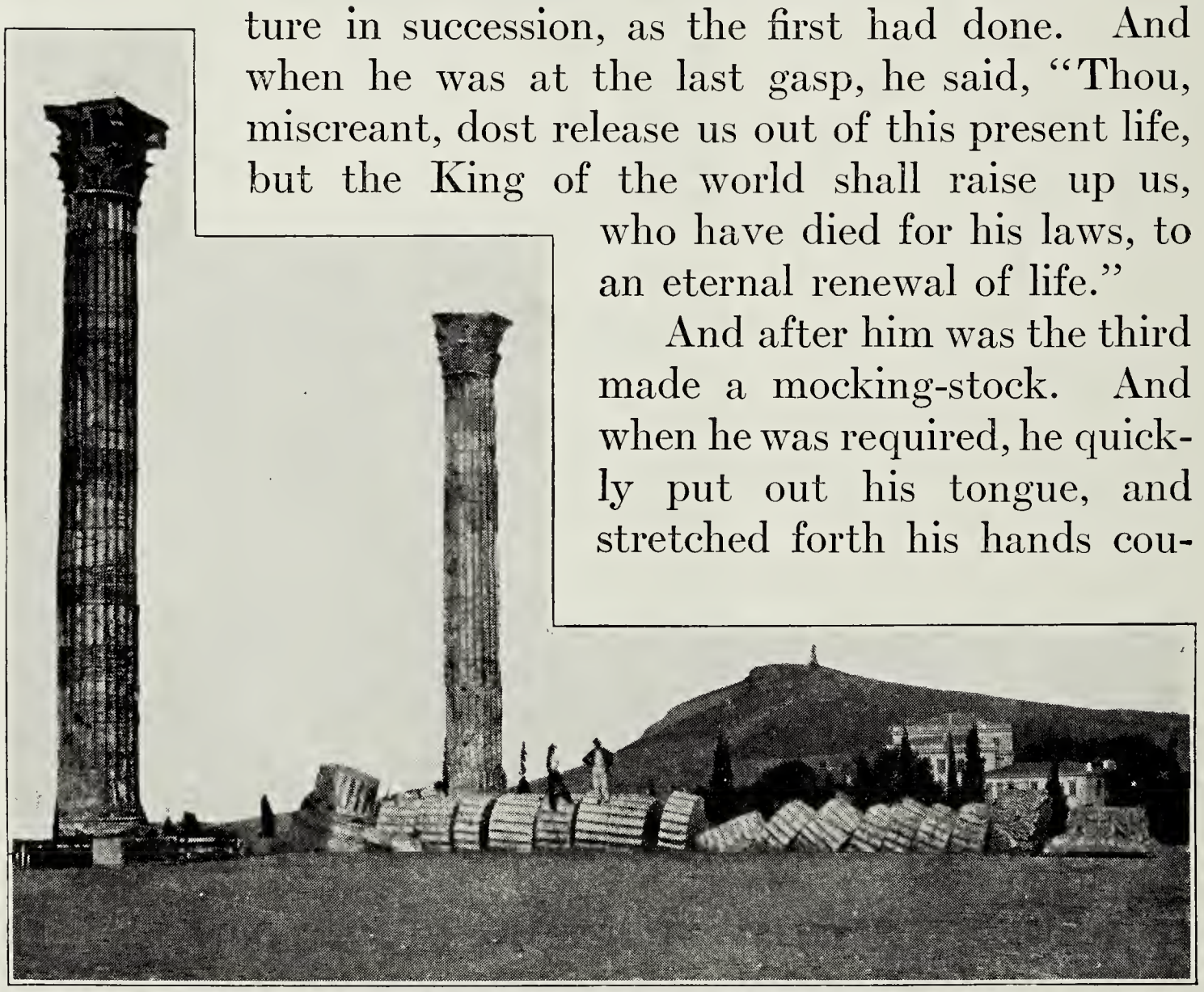
We have here perhaps the most successful endeavor of the Greek artist to express those qualities that distinguish necessarily the chief god of any pantheon, even the God of the Jews and the God of the Christians,—a Zeus whose head shows dignity, intellectual power, fatherly sympathy, conscious rectitude. King Antiochus of Syria was passionately fond of Greek philosophy and art. His chief ambition was to spread Greek culture throughout the Roman Empire.

But they and their mother exhorted one another to die nobly, saying thus, "The Lord God beholdeth, and in truth is entreated for us, as Moses declared in his song, which witnesseth against the people to their faces, saying, 'And he shall be entreated for his servants.'"

And when the first had died after this manner, they brought the second to the mocking; and they asked him, "Wilt thou eat, before thy body be punished in every limb?"

But he answered in the language of his fathers and said to them, "No." Wherefore he also underwent the next torture in succession, as the first had done. And when he was at the last gasp, he said, "Thou, miscreant, dost release us out of this present life, but the King of the world shall raise up us, who have died for his laws, to an eternal renewal of life."

And after him was the third made a mocking-stock. And when he was required, he quickly put out his tongue, and stretched forth his hands cou-



COLUMNS OF THE TEMPLE OF THE OLYMPIAN ZEUS AT ATHENS

The huge columns of this temple bear witness to the enthusiasm with which converts to the Greek faith built to the honor of their new-found divinities. The same Antiochus who tried to thrust the Greek religion down the throats of the Jews, spent enormous sums in Athens in building this very temple. The broad platform on which these columns stand is his; the plan of the temple was due to his architect. The grandiose character of this structure, so un-Greek in its size, is what one would expect from an Eastern ruler who had spent fourteen years as a hostage in Rome.

rageously, and nobly said, "From heaven I possess these; and for h's laws' sake I contemn these; and from him I hope to receive these back again": insomuch that the king himself and they that were with him were astonished at the young man's soul, for that he nothing regarded the pains.

And when he too was dead, they shamefully handled and tortured the fourth in like manner. And being come near to death he said thus, "It is good to die at the hands of men and to look for the hopes which are given by God, that we shall be raised up again by him."

And next after him they brought the fifth, and shamefully handled him. But he looked toward the king and said: "Because thou hast authority among men, though thou art thyself corruptible, thou doest what thou wilt; yet think not that our race hath been forsaken of God; but hold thou on thy way, and behold his sovereign majesty, how it will torture thee and thy family."

And after him they brought the sixth. And when he was at the point to die, he said, "Be not vainly deceived, for we suffer these things for our own doings, as sinning against our own God: but think not thou that thou shalt be unpunished, having essayed to fight against God."

THE STAUNCH COURAGE OF A MOTHER

But above all was the mother marvelous and worthy of honorable memory; for when she looked on seven sons perishing within the space of one day, she bore the sight with a good courage, for the hopes that she had set on the Lord. And she exhorted each one of them in the language of their fathers, filled with a noble temper and stirring up her womanish thought with manly passion.

But Antiochus, thinking himself to be despised, whilst the youngest was yet alive did not only make his appeal to him by words, but also at the same time promised with oaths

THE MOTHER OF THE SEVEN SONS
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

that he would enrich him and raise him to high estate, if he would turn from the customs of his fathers, and that he would take him for his friend and intrust him with affairs.

But when the young man would in no wise give heed, the king called to him his mother, and exhorted her that she would counsel the lad to save himself.

But bending toward him, laughing the cruel tyrant to scorn, she spoke thus in the language of her fathers, "Fear not this butcher, but, proving thyself worthy of thy brethren, accept thy death, that in the mercy of God I may receive thee again with thy brethren."

But before she had yet ended speaking, the young man said: "Whom wait ye for? I obey not the commandment of the king, but I hearken to the commandment of the law that was given to our fathers through Moses. But thou, that hast devised all manner of evil against the Hebrews, shalt in no wise escape the hands of God. For we are suffering because of our own sins; and if for rebuke and chastening our living Lord hath been angered a little while, yet shall he again be reconciled with his own servants. But thou, O unholy man and of all most vile, be not vainly lifted up in thy wild pride with uncertain hopes, raising thy hand against the heavenly children; for not yet hast thou escaped the judgment of the Almighty God that seeth all things. For these our brethren, having endured a short pain that bringeth everlasting life, have now died under God's covenant: but thou, through the judgment of God, shalt receive in just measure the penalties of thine arrogancy. But I, as my brethren, give up both body and soul for the laws of our fathers, calling upon God that he may speedily become gracious to the nation; and that thou amidst trials and plagues mayest confess that he alone is God; and that in me and my brethren thou mayest stay the wrath of the Almighty, which hath been justly brought upon our whole race."

But the king, falling into a rage, handled him worse than all the rest, being exasperated at his mocking. So he also died pure from pollution, putting his whole trust in the Lord.

And last of all, after her sons, the mother died.[59]

THE GREAT EVENTS OF LATER OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY

Jerusalem taken by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; the walls destroyed, the temple burned, the citizens exiled; end of the kingdom of Judah, 586 B.C.

The exiles' return to Jerusalem, 537 B.C., is permitted by Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, who conquered Babylon, 538 B.C.

Rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem commences, 520 B.C.

Ezra journeys from Babylon to Jerusalem to reform the Jews' religion, probably 458 B.C.

Nehemiah, appointed governor of Jerusalem by the king of Persia, journeys to Jerusalem, rebuilds the city walls, 445 B.C.; his second visit, 432 B.C.

Judea taken by Alexander the Great, 332 B.C.; beginning of Greek influence in Jewish life.

Judea controlled by Ptolemy and his successors, kings of Egypt, 320 B.C.

Judea taken from Egypt by the Seleucid kings of Syria, 197 B.C.

The Maccabees revolt against the persecution of Antiochus IV, 167 B.C.; the victories of Judas Maccabeus permit rededication of the temple, 165 B.C.

The Maccabees secure the independence of the Jews under Simon, brother of Judas Maccabeus, 142 B.C.

Jerusalem is seized by Pompey, the Roman general; beginning of control by Rome, 63 B.C.

Herod the Great begins his reign as king of Judea, 37 B.C.

HEROES OF LATER ISRAEL

ZERUBBABEL

The Hero of the First Return from Captivity

ZERUBBABEL was a royal prince of the house of David, the most honorable person who could be persuaded to leave the comfortable and prosperous land of exile and go back to the forsaken and poverty-stricken land of his fathers. This return of the captives was made possible by an edict of Cyrus, that magnanimous tyrant of Babylon, who in the year 538 B.C. proclaimed that all conquered and exiled peoples might return to the lands of their nativity. All the inspiration and encouragement which the prophets of the Exile could bring to bear was necessary to induce any one to go; but in 537 B.C. the first little band started on the eight-hundred-mile journey from the River Chebar to Jerusalem. They were but a handful, but they were well led. Not only Zerubbabel, but Joshua the priest, a descendant of Zadok, the high priest under David, accompanied them to reëstablish the worship of Jehovah.

Zerubbabel had before him a huge task. He was aided, to be sure, by the good Cyrus, who gave him grants of money, enlisted the aid of his governors west of the Euphrates, and even sent back the sacred vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the house of Jehovah. But the colony was far from being self-supporting, and for a long time the expenses not only of reëstablishing themselves but of keeping themselves alive had to be borne largely by the wealthy Jews who stayed behind in Babylon. On the other hand, although Zerubbabel laid the foundations of the new temple in 536 B.C., his unfortunate policy, by which the people of the land were refused a share in the work, so angered them that they blocked all transportation of timber from Lebanon and stopped the building of the temple for sixteen years.

In the meantime a new political ambition fired the Jews. The great King Cyrus had died. The reign of Cambyses his son was short and disastrous. Darius seized the throne but was obliged to defend it against nine pretenders. In this disordered period it seemed to the Jews that now Jehovah would completely liberate them and restore the throne of David. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah fanned this hope into a blaze. They proclaimed that if Jehovah's people would perform their vows and build his temple, he would establish his kingdom. Evidently the plan was to crown Zerubbabel, who was a prince of the Davidic line. They therefore worked with feverish haste, and in spite of a new attempt to hinder their work, they at last completed the temple in 516 B.C. By this time Zerubbabel has quite disappeared. The Messianic hope of the Jews was crushed, and did not revive until nearly four centuries later.

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THE CHASM OF THE LEONTES

This rugged landscape shows the Lebanon Mountains breaking down toward Galilee. In ancient days these hills were covered with forests. It was from this district that the returning exiles brought their timber for the rebuilding of the House of Jehovah. The Leontes River cuts a most beautiful gorge through the Lebanon range, and, as it nears the Mediterranean, passes through a wild chasm with banks sometimes a thousand feet high. In grandeur this chasm has no equal in Syria, and few in the world.

ZERUBBABEL
AND
THE RETURN FROM EXILE

After Many Years of Exile, a Company, Led by Zerubbabel and Two Earnest Prophets, Return to Jerusalem and Rebuild the Temple

THE REVIVAL OF HOPE

"They Are for a Prey, and None Delivereth"

THIS is a people robbed and spoiled;
They are all of them snared in holes,
They are hid in prison houses:
They are for a prey, and none delivereth;
For a spoil, and none saith, "Restore."
Who among you will give ear to this?
Who will hearken and hear for the time to come?
Who gave Jacob for booty,
And Israel to the robbers?
Did not the Lord,
He against whom we have sinned?
For they would not walk in his ways,
Neither were they obedient to his law.
Therefore poured he upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle:
It hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not;
It burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.

A Valley of Dry Bones Comes to Life

When Jerusalem was laid waste, a large company of Jews was carried captive to Babylonia and planted there as a colony. As Jeremiah the prophet advised, they built houses, did their daily business and worked for

the good of the country. Some like Nehemiah later rose to places of eminence and honor. Ezekiel lived with these exiles as their pastor; while Jeremiah followed those Jews who, after the deportation, fled into Egypt.

After many years of exile, the Babylonian Jews were encouraged by the kindness of the king of Babylon in restoring their imprisoned king Jehoiachin to freedom and royal honor. They were homesick to return to Jerusalem. In an allegory, Ezekiel pictures for them how the nation will some day come to life again.

The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about; and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and lo, they were very dry.

And he said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?"

And I answered, "O Lord God, thou knowest."

Again he said to me, "Prophesy upon these bones, and say to them, 'O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.'"

So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold an earthquake, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

Then said he to me, "Prophesy to the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, 'Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.'"

So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

Then he said to me: "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried

and our hope is lost: we are clean cut off.' Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land. Then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it and performed it, saith the Lord.'"

Couriers Bring Word of the Fall of Babylon

Cyrus the Persian, the greatest king who ever ruled Western Asia, defeated Nabonidus, the last king of Babylonia, and easily captured the city of Babylon. One of the prophets has left us a most graphic description of the fall and the flight, and the utter failure of the gods of Babylon to protect the city or the refugees. Babylon's fall made the return of the Jews possible.

Thus hath the Lord said to me:
"Go, set a watchman;
Let him declare what he seeth."

And he saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen,
A chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels;
And he hearkened diligently with much heed:
And he cried as a lion:
"My lord, I stand continually upon the watchtower in the daytime,
And I am set in my watch whole nights:
And behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen!"

And he [the charioteer] answered and said,
"Babylon is fallen! is fallen!
And all the graven images of her gods he hath broken to the ground!"

CYRUS RESTORING THE VESSELS OF THE TEMPLE

From a drawing by Gustave Doré

Here we see the Jews receiving the precious vessels that Nebuchadnezzar had carried off as prizes to his Babylonian gods. Cyrus was generous to the returning Jews, but the main expense of their return to Jerusalem fell upon wealthy Jews in Babylon. Their loyal service was to provide money for their countrymen, for no colony could support itself in a ruined city and a neglected country. History is repeating itself in this respect today: Palestine has long been financed by Europe and America, and must be for years to come.

King Cyrus Encourages the Return

THE JEWISH LEADERS COME BACK TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY

In the first year of Cyrus the king,[60] Cyrus the king made a decree: "Concerning the house of God in Jerusalem, Let the house be built, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof sixty cubits, and the breadth thereof sixty cubits; with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: and also let the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is in Jerusalem, and brought to Babylon, be restored, and brought again to the temple which is in Jerusalem, every one to its place, and place them in the house of God."

And they were delivered to one whose name was Sheshbazzar,[61] whom he had made governor. And he said to him, "Take these vessels; go, carry them into the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt in its place."

CYRUS IS GOD'S CHOSEN AGENT

Cyrus' unexpected clemency deeply touched the Jews. They could not but regard it as providential. That one who did not know Jehovah should become the instrument of his will was a supreme evidence of God's personal care. The prophet of the Exile put the thought in these words:

I am the Lord that saith of Cyrus, "He is my shepherd,
and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem,
'Thou shalt be built'; and to the temple, 'Thy foundation
shall be laid.'"

Thus saith the Lord to his anointed,
To Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped,
To subdue nations before him,
To open before him the two-leaved gates;
And the gates shall not be shut:

"I will go before thee,
And make the crooked places straight:
I will break in pieces the gates of brass,
And cut in sunder the bars of iron:
And I will give thee the treasures of darkness,
And hidden riches of secret places,
That thou mayest know that I, the Lord,
Who call thee by thy name,
Am the God of Israel.
For Jacob my servant's sake,
And Israel my chosen one,
I have even called thee by thy name:
I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me."

Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose

CHRISTIAN STREET, JERUSALEM
From an engraving

spirit God had stirred, to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem. And all they that were round about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, besides all that was willingly offered.

"THEY SHALL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH"

What is supposed to be a direct reference to the returning exiles, as in their eagerness they first hurry from the land of their captivity, then slacken their pace, and finally settle down to the weary tramp across the desert, is contained in this graphic prophecy.

Hast thou not known?
Hast thou not heard?
That the everlasting God,
The Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth,
Fainteth not, neither is weary?
There is no searching of his understanding.
He giveth power to the faint;
And to him that hath no might he increaseth strength.
Even the youths shall faint and be weary,
And the young men shall utterly fall:
But they that wait for the Lord shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings as eagles;
They shall run, and not be weary;
They shall walk, and not faint.

THE RETURN OF THE EXILES

The Refugees Take Flight

In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge,
O ye caravans of Dedanites [North Arabians].
The inhabitants of the land of Tema brought water to him
that was thirsty:
They met, with their bread, him that fled.

For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword,
And from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war.

The Babylonian Gods Are Carried off as Baggage

In this satirical picture the prophet shows the helpless idols of Babylon carried in flight upon the backs of wearied beasts. On the contrary, Jehovah, Israel's God, carries his people on his almighty shoulders, and brings them to safety.

Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth;
Their idols are upon the beasts, and upon the cattle:
The things that ye carried about are a load,
They are a burden to the weary beast.

They stoop, they bow down together;
They could not deliver the burden,
But themselves are gone into captivity.

Hearken to me, O house of Jacob,
And all the remnant of the house of Israel,
Who have been borne by me from the lap,
Who have been carried by me from birth.

Even to your old age I am he,
And even to gray hairs will I carry you:
I have made, and I will bear;
Even I will carry, and will deliver you.

They lavish gold out of the bag,
And weigh silver in the balance,
And hire a goldsmith, and he maketh it a god;
They fall down, yea, they worship.

They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him,
And set him in his place, and he standeth;
From his place shall he not remove:

Yea, one shall cry to him, yet can he not answer,
Nor save him out of his trouble.

The Home-coming Is Wonderfully Blest

Anticipating the joyous home-coming, the prophet pictures it as the return of sheep to their sheepfold, and of children to their mother.

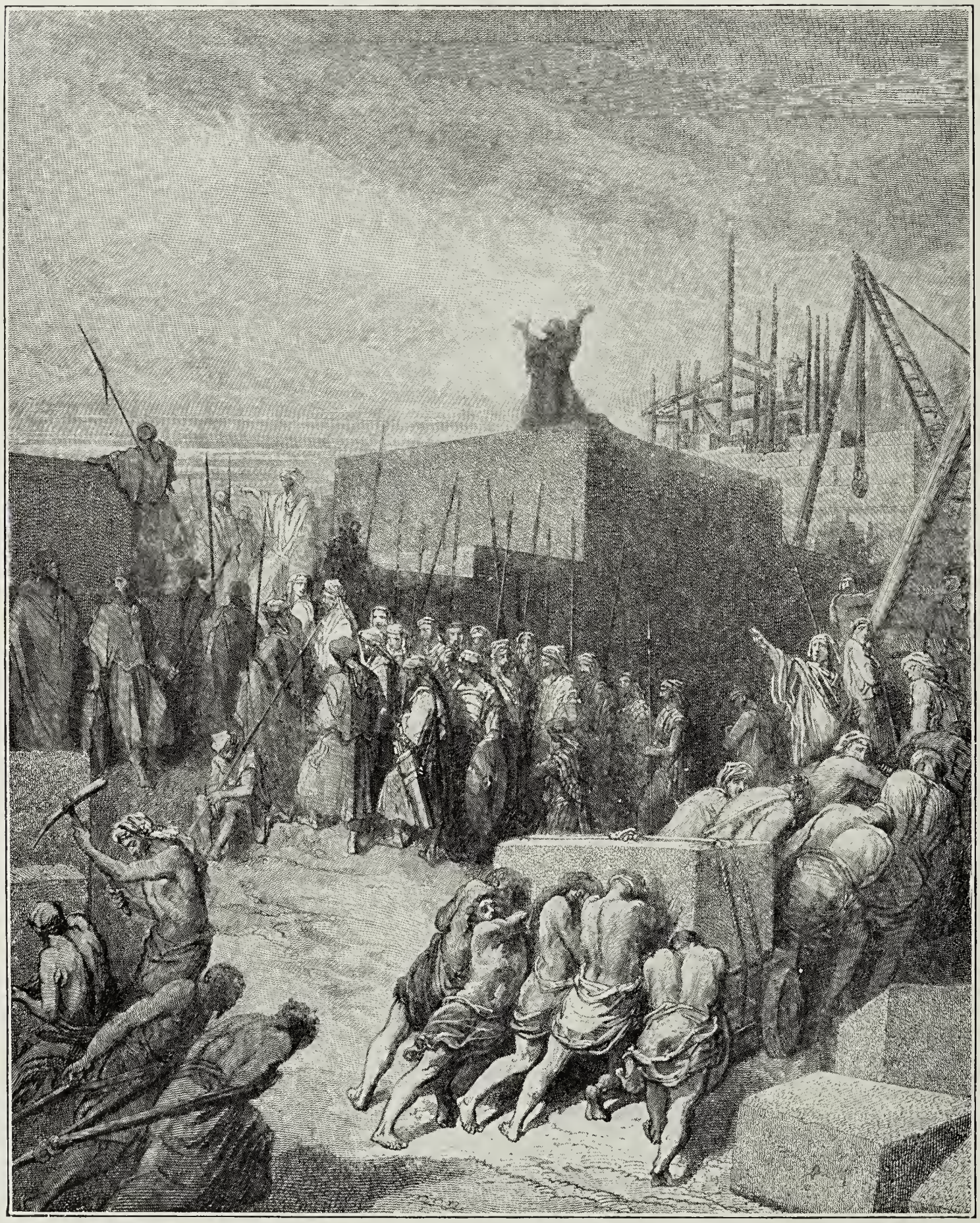
They shall feed in the ways,
And their pastures shall be in all high places.
They shall not hunger or thirst:
Neither shall the heat nor the sun smite them:
For he that hath mercy on them shall lead them,
Even by the springs of water shall he guide them.
And I will make all my mountains a way,
And my highways shall be built up.
Behold, these shall come from far:
And, lo, these from the north and from the west;
And these from the land of Sinim.

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd:
He shall gather the lambs in his arm,
And carry them in his bosom,
And shall gently lead those that have their young.

Thy children shall make haste;
Thy destroyers and they that made thee waste shall
go forth from thee.
Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold:
All these gather themselves together, and come to thee.
Thou shalt surely clothe thyself with them all, as with
an ornament,
And bind them on thee, as a bride doth.

The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost
the other,

Shall say again in thine ears,
"The place is too narrow for me:
Give place to me that I may dwell."



REBUILDING THE WALLS OF THE TEMPLE
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

Shall the prey be taken from the mighty,
Or the lawful captive delivered?

But thus saith the Lord,

"Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away,
And the prey of the terrible shall be delivered:
For I will contend with him that contendeth with thee,
And I will save thy children."

The Jews Resume Burnt Offerings on the Temple Site

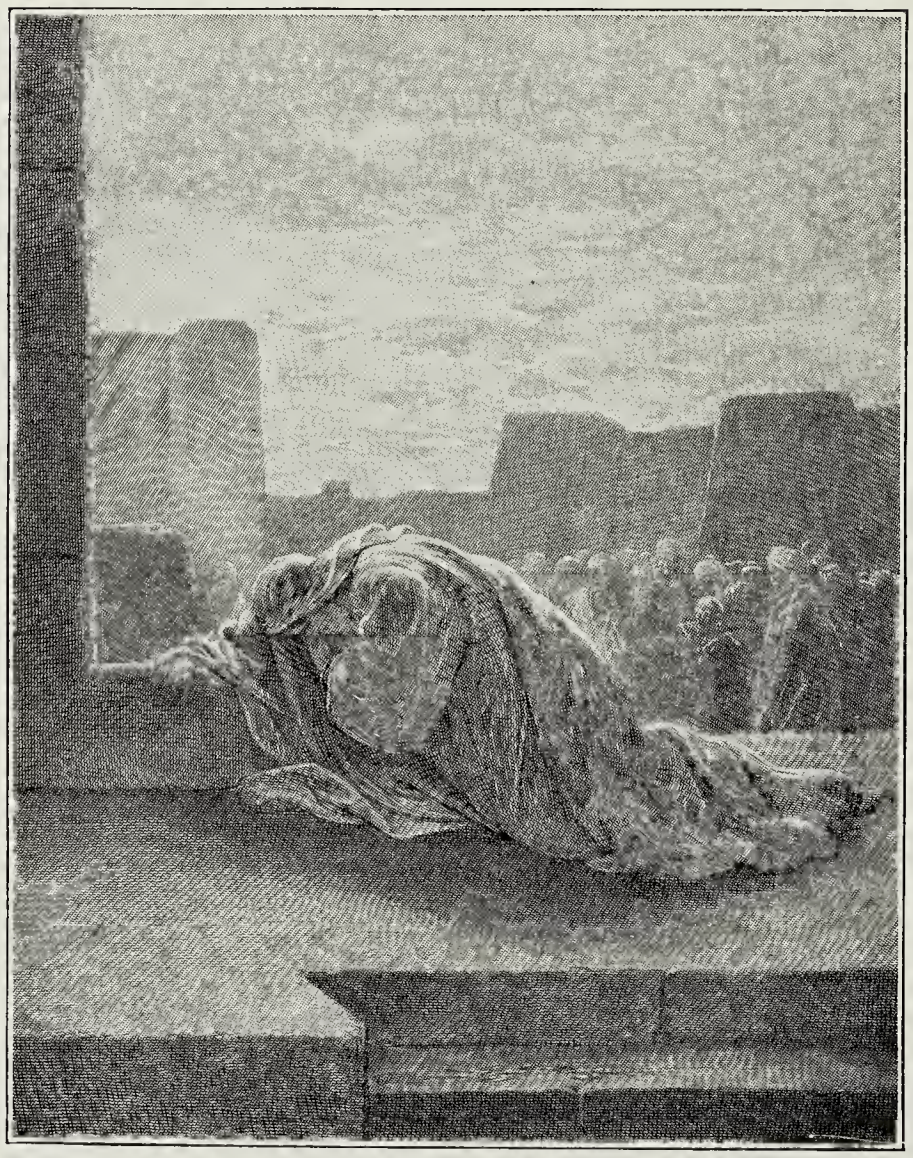
And when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem.[62] Then stood up Jeshua [Joshua] the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God.

And they set the altar upon its bases; for fear was upon them because of the people of those countries: and they offered burnt offerings thereon to the Lord, even burnt offerings morning and evening. They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required; and afterward offered the continual burnt offering, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the Lord that were consecrated, and of every one that willingly offered a freewill offering to the Lord. From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings to the Lord. But the foundation of the temple of the Lord was not yet laid.

They gave money also to the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and oil, to them of Sidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.

"The Lord Hath Done Great Things for Us"

When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion,
We were like them that dream.
Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
And our tongue with singing:
Then said they among the heathen,
"The Lord hath done great things for them."
The Lord hath done great things for us;
Whereof we are glad.



EZRA IN PRAYER
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

Turn again our captivity, O Lord,
As the streams in the South.
They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed,
Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his
sheaves with him.

The Lord Shall Choose Jerusalem Again

Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion:
For, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee,
saith the Lord.
And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day,
And they shall be my people:
I will dwell in the midst of thee,
And thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me
to thee.
The Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land,
And shall choose Jerusalem again.
Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord:
For he is raised up out of his holy habitation.

THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE

And whither came these goodly stones
'Twas Israel's pride to raise:
The glory of the former house,
The joy of ancient days?

From coasts the stately cedar crowns
Each noble slab was brought,
In Lebanon's deep quarries hewn
And on its mountains wrought.

There rung the hammer's heavy stroke
Among the echoing rocks;
There chased the chisel's keen, sharp edge
The rude, unshapen blocks.

And thus in majesty sublime
And noiseless pomp it rose—
Fit dwelling for the God of peace!
A temple of repose.

THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE

The Jews Gather Materials for the Task

JERUSALEM IS A DESOLATION

Joyous though the people were to be back home, the beloved city and the holy house were yet in ruins.

Thy holy cities are a wilderness,
Zion is a wilderness,
Jerusalem is a desolation.
Our holy and our beautiful house,
Where our fathers praised thee,
Is burned up with fire;
And all our pleasant places are laid waste.

HAGGAI AROUSES THE PEOPLE TO THE TASK

In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, 'This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.'"

Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?

"Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord.

JOSHUA, THE HIGH PRIEST, AT THE LAYING OF THE CORNER STONE OF THE SECOND TEMPLE

From a drawing by Schnorr von Carolsfeld

"Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of my house that lieth waste, and ye run every man to his own house.

"Therefore the heaven over you withholdeth the dew, and the earth withholdeth its fruit.

"And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the grain, and upon the new wine, and

upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labor of the hands."

Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him; and the people did fear before the Lord.[63]

Then spoke Haggai the Lord's messenger in the Lord's message to the people, saying, "I am with you, saith the Lord."

And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God, in the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king.

In the seventh month, in the twenty-first day of the month, came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, "Speak now to Zerubbabel governor of Judah, and to Joshua the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying:

"Who is left among you that saw this house in its first glory?
And how do ye see it now?
Is it not in your eyes in comparison with it as nothing?
Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel,
And be ye strong, O Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest;
And be strong, all ye people of the land, and work:
For I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts:
According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt,
So my spirit remaineth in the midst of you: fear ye not!

"For thus saith the Lord of hosts:
Yet once, it is a little while,
And I will shake the heavens,
And the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;
I will shake all nations,
And the desire of all nations shall come:
And I will fill this house with glory.
The silver is mine, and the gold is mine.
The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former,
And in this place will I give peace."

Zechariah Inspires the People with Zeal

In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius,[64] the word of the Lord came to Zechariah the prophet, saying: "The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore say thou to them, 'Thus saith the Lord of hosts: Turn ye to me, and I will turn to you. Be ye not as your fathers, to whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evil doings: but they did not hear, nor hearken to me, saith the Lord.

"'Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever?

"'But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, Like as the Lord of hosts thought to do to us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us.'

"Therefore thus saith the Lord, I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it, and a measuring line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem."

Then I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. Then said I, "Whither goest thou?" And he said to me, "To measure

Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof."

And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went forth to meet him, and said to him, "Run, speak to this young man, saying, 'Jerusalem shall dwell like villages without walls, for the multitude of men and cattle therein. For I will be to her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.'"

Then he answered and spoke to me, saying: "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, saying:

"Not by might,
Nor by power,
But by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.

"Who art thou, O great mountain, before Zerubbabel?
Thou shalt become a plain:
And he shall bring forth the headstone thereof,
With shoutings of 'Grace! Grace!' unto it."

Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying: "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundations of this temple; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me to you. For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel."

Thus saith the Lord: "I am returned to Zion,
And will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem:
And Jerusalem shall be called 'A city of truth';
And the mountain of the Lord of hosts 'the holy mountain.'"
Thus saith the Lord of hosts:
"There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the
streets of Jerusalem,
Every man with his staff in his hand for very age.
And the streets of the city shall be full of boys
And girls playing in the streets thereof."

A Malicious Plot Halts the Work

Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple to the Lord God of Israel; then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said to them, "Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice to him since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assyria, who brought us up hither."

FOUNTAIN WITHIN THE TEMPLE AREA TODAY

From an etching by E. M. Lilien

But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said to them, "Ye have nothing to do with us to build a house to our God; but we ourselves together will build to the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us."

Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, and hired counselors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia. Then ceased the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem. So it ceased until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied to the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel. Then rose up Zerubbabel and Jeshua, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them.

At the same time came to them Tattenai, governor on this side the river, and Shethar-bozenai, and their companions, and said thus to them, "Who hath commanded you to build this house?"

A Decree of Cyrus Saves the Situation

As the outcome of this inquiry, these Persian officials reported to the king that the Jews claimed to have an edict of King Cyrus authorizing the work. Their letter ended with this suggestion:

"Now therefore, if it seem good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure house, which is there at Babylon, whether it be so, that a decree was made by Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem; and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter."

Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon. And there was found at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein was a record thus written:

"In the first year of Cyrus the king, Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem: 'Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof sixty cubits, and the breadth thereof sixty cubits; with three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber; and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: and also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought to Babylon, be restored, and brought

again to the temple which is at Jerusalem, every one to its place, and place them in the house of God.

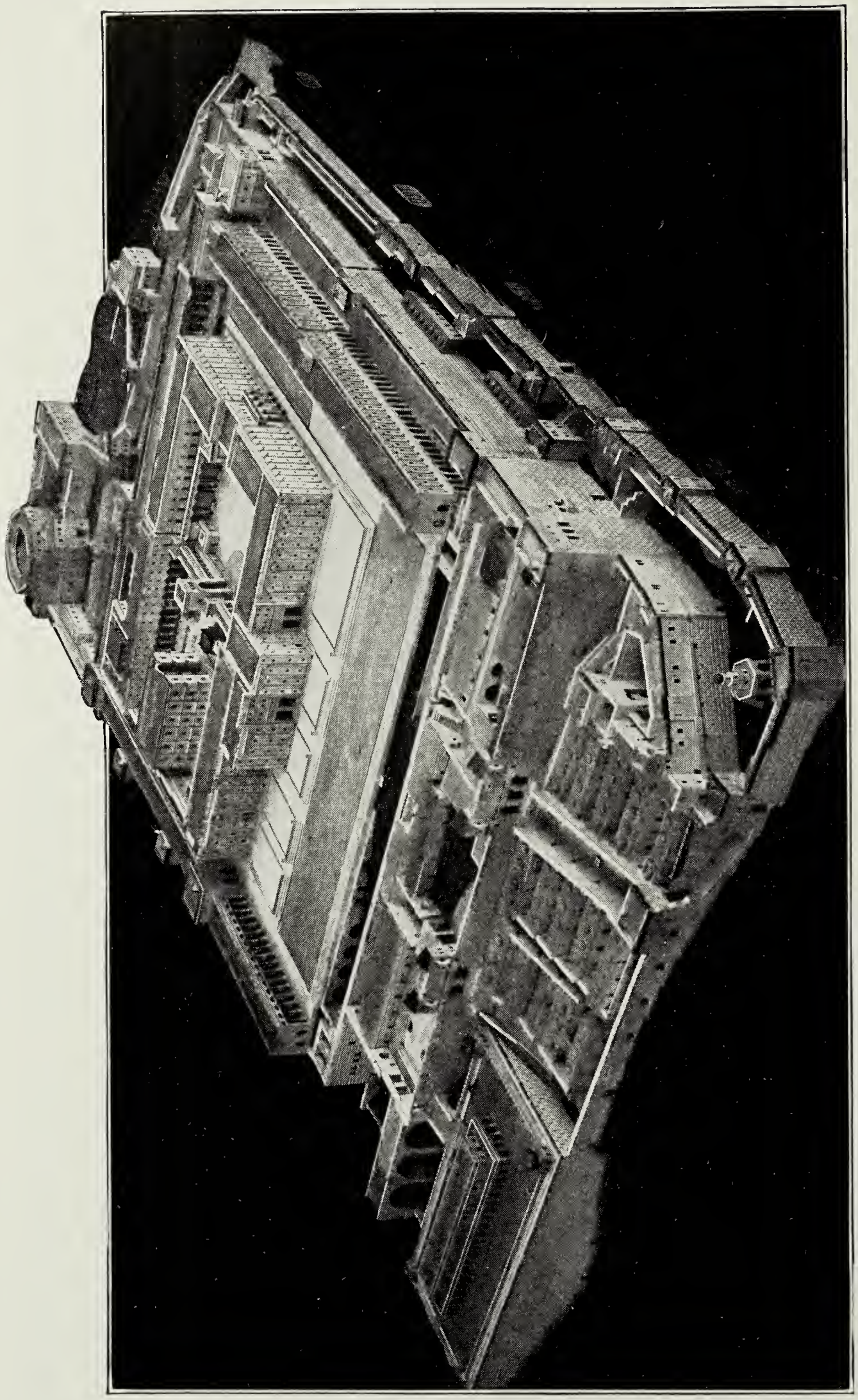
"Now therefore, Tattenai, governor beyond the river, Shethar-bozenai, and your companions, the Apharsachites, who are beyond the river, be ye far from thence: let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in its place.

"Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God: that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given to these men, that they be not hindered. And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail: that they may offer sacrifices of sweet savors to the God of heaven; and pray for the life of the king and of his sons.

"Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this. And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there destroy all kings and people, that shall put their hand to alter and to destroy this house of God which is at Jerusalem. I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed."

Then Tattenai, governor on this side the river, Shethar-bozenai, and their companions, according to that which Darius the king had sent, so they did speedily.

And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel.[65] And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.



ZERUBBABEL'S TEMPLE
From a model by Schick
From a photograph, American Colony, Jerusalem

THE DAYS OF RECONSTRUCTION

Joshua Is to Head a Priestly Line

And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said to Satan, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spoke to those that stood before him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And to him he said, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment."

And I said, "Let them set a fair miter upon his head." So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by.

And the angel of the Lord protested to Joshua, saying, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.

"Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant 'The Branch.' For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree."

The Jews Choose a King

"Who now shall be our king?" was the question in the reëstablished city. Some must have thought that the crown should go to Zerubbabel,

who not only had proved an efficient leader, but who also was of royal descent. According to Zechariah, the priest Joshua, who had helped Zerubbabel in the rebuilding, was secretly crowned. This Joshua became the ancestor of fourteen high priests.

THE BUSY STREETS OF MODERN JERUSALEM

From an etching by E. M. Lilien

And the word of the Lord came to me, saying: "Take of them of the captivity, and come thou the same day, and go into the home of Josiah the son of Zephaniah; then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and speak to him saying, 'Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying: Behold the man whose name is THE BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne. And the crowns shall be kept for a memorial in the temple of the Lord. And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord, and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me to you.' And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God!" [66]

MALACHI PROTESTS

How different from the former hopes of the people was the reality now in Jerusalem! The temple was rebuilt, but the kingdom was not restored. The people became discouraged at the slowness of the city's recovery. Even the modest sanctuary was a disappointment; and soon the inhabitants turned themselves to money-making, to shrewd practices, and to the neglect of the worship of Jehovah. Then rose an indignant voice of protest against these who had forgotten everything and had learned nothing.

A PROTEST AGAINST MAKING MEAN OFFERINGS TO GOD

A son honoreth his father,
And a servant his master:
If then I be a father, where is mine honor?
And if I be a master, where is my fear?
Saith the Lord of hosts to you, O priests, that despise my name.
But ye say, "Wherein have we despised thy name?"
Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar;
And ye say, "Wherein have we polluted it?"
In that ye say, "The table of the Lord is contemptible."

And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil?
And if ye offer the lame and the sick, is it not evil?
Offer it now to thy governor; will he be pleased with thee,
Or accept thy person?
I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts,
Neither will I accept an offering at your hand;
For, from the rising of the sun even to the going down of
the same,
My name shall be great among the Gentiles;
And in every place incense shall be offered to my name, and
a pure offering;
For my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the
Lord of hosts.

The Faithful Shall Be Blessed

Will a man rob God?
Yet ye have robbed me.
But ye say, "Wherein have we robbed thee?"
In tithes and offerings.
Ye are cursed with a curse:
For ye have robbed me,
Even this whole nation.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse,
That there may be food in my house,
And prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts.
If I will not open for you the windows of heaven,
And pour you out a blessing;
There shall not be room enough to receive it.

Then I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes,
And he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground;
Neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the
field.
And all nations shall call you blessed:

For ye shall be a delightsome land,
Saith the Lord of hosts.

But to you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I make, saith the Lord of hosts.

THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

Daughter of Zion, from the dust,
  Exalt thy fallen head;
Again in thy Redeemer trust,
  He calls thee from the dead.

Awake, awake, put on thy strength,
  Thy beautiful array;
The day of freedom dawns at length,
  The Lord's appointed day.

Rebuild thy walls, thy bounds enlarge
  And send thy heralds forth;
Say to the South, "Give up thy charge,
  And keep not back, O North!"

They come, they come;—thine exiled bands,
  Where'er they rest or roam,
Have heard thy voice in distant lands,
  And hasten to their home.

Thus, though the universe shall burn,
  And God his works destroy,
With songs the ransomed shall return,
  And everlasting joy.

—*James Montgomery*

NEHEMIAH

The Leader of Israel's Reconstruction

NEHEMIAH was the savior of the later Jewish state, as Zerubbabel had been its founder. Surely the state needed a savior, for it had fallen on evil times. Persia was still its overlord, but no longer was the merciful Cyrus at the head of that great empire; oppression and corruption had succeeded. The first enthusiasm of the returning exiles had waned; the old devotion to the reëstablishment of the temple had died down. Sordid human nature had reasserted itself in priest and ruler, and the old evils of class hatred and social injustice were again intrenching themselves. The day was indeed dark, and the night starless.

Nehemiah breaks in upon the despondency of the times like a sunrise. This great patriot in exile was cupbearer to the Persian king, Artaxerxes I, at Susa. To him there came a deputation from the inhabitants of Judea, bringing such pitiful news of the plight of the Holy City that Nehemiah used his first opportunity to secure from his master a leave of absence. Artaxerxes also gave him passports to the governors beyond the Euphrates, a military escort, and authority to make levies of timber in the king's forest in order to rebuild the walls of the city. Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem in 445 B.C. There he found the high-priestly rulers suspicious and hostile because his authority superseded theirs and because they were afraid he might let in some light on their unscrupulous conduct. He found also hostile Samaritans on the north, hostile Ammonites, Arabians and Philistines at the other points of the compass.

Nothing daunted, Nehemiah made a tour of the ruined city by night, then mapped out his campaign for rebuilding. His plan was to put a section of the wall in charge of each family, and so to establish responsibility for a definite task, and stimulate friendly rivalry. Nothing could stop this work carried on under Nehemiah's inspiration and personal supervision. Sanballat, the satrap at Samaria, loosed his guerilla warriors upon the city, but the builders turned soldier and repelled them. Nehemiah himself was everywhere all the time. He even slept in his clothes. In this way he completed the walls of the city in fifty-two days. Sanballat's trickery and his threats were alike fruitless. He could neither get Nehemiah into his power nor stop the organization of the city for permanent defense and administration. Within a few months, after a hundred and fifty years of desolation, the city was again put in habitable form, and the external part of Nehemiah's commission was accomplished.

It was found necessary, however, to strengthen the struggling colony in other ways. During the process of building the hard lot of the poor

became woefully apparent. Having left their farms and other profitable work to build the city's walls as a labor of love, they found themselves out of bread. Some had mortgaged their lands to wealthy men, only to have their creditors foreclose and take their lands away. Others had to sell their children into slavery to raise money to live. Nehemiah called the capitalists together, appealed to their race loyalty and their devotion to the great cause for which they were all sacrificing, and showed how he himself was refusing salary as governor in order to keep down taxation, and was even feeding many people from his private purse. Thus he won them over to better practices. This moral victory is testimony to the great personal influence of Nehemiah.

Not content with this moral reform, he went on to religious matters. He appointed a committee to restore the temple finances to a sound basis. Having found the observance of the Sabbath much less strict than the law required, he issued an edict forbidding trade within the city on the holy day. The gates were closed at sundown on Friday; the dealers in fish and provisions from Tyre and other parts were thrust out by force. Next, he undertook to abate the evil of mixed marriages. The Book of Deuteronomy had rigidly commanded that Hebrews should not intermarry with foreigners; but in the troublous times of the Exile and after, with no one to enforce this regulation, the Jews had become lax. Nehemiah saw that the unity of the state and the purity of religion required that this law be revived. Revived it was, in part at least, though the full enforcement waited for the coming of more zealous reformers and the growth of a more exclusive spirit.

The Jewish people were perhaps never happier than during the century that followed the reforms of Nehemiah. Behind the new walls Jerusalem found courage, peace, and security. The meager resources of Judea were developed. Under favoring edicts from the Great King the borders of Jewry were extended northward and into the Plain of Sharon. Still the colony never became large; and because of its racial exclusiveness and its aloofness from the outside world and from the great lines of trade, it remained an almost unknown factor in the great empire. Herodotus, who tells us much about the East in this period, apparently never heard of the Jews.

Persia allowed Judea a large measure of self-government; in fact, about the only requirements laid on her were that she should pay a definite tax, furnish a levy of youths for the royal standing army, and keep the peace.

We know very little about the further life of Nehemiah. We know nothing whatever about his end. The Bible recounts his work, and then leaves him. He rendered an incalculable service to the cause of Judaism, not only by reëstablishing Jerusalem, but by restoring the ideals of righteous living which the prophets of former ages had proclaimed.

THE GREAT NORTH WALL OF JERUSALEM

Photograph by Publishers' Photo Service

This is the latest of the many walls of Jerusalem built on the site of Herod Agrippa's walls erected in 44 A.D. The walls of Nehemiah ran roughly parallel to this wall, about a quarter of a mile to the left. We see here several of the thirty-four towers which adorn the walls of the city. The present walls date from the sixteenth century, and only a few courses of their masonry belong to the ancient walls. The walls are irregular, as they follow the four hills upon which Jerusalem is built, but, on the whole, "the city lieth foursquare."

NEHEMIAH

Seventy years had passed after the coming of Zerubbabel. Jerusalem was still unwalled and defenseless; the inhabitants had fallen into listless discouragement; and the stream of returning Jews from the lands of captivity had ceased. Then Nehemiah, one of the sturdiest and most single-hearted of the heroes of the Hebrews, felt moved to go to the land of his fathers and bring about better conditions. His account of his adventures has been much admired for its simplicity and straightforwardness.

THE CHALLENGE OF A GREAT NEED

Nehemiah Grieves over His People's Lot

THE words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah.
Now it came to pass in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace, that Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men out of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, who were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.[67]

And they said to me, "The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire."

And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days.

And I fasted and prayed before the God of heaven, and I said:

"I beseech thee, O Lord God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments, let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel, thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have

THE PEOPLE MOURNING OVER JERUSALEM
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned. We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judg-

ments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses. Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, 'If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: but if ye turn to me, and keep my commandments and do them; though there were of you cast out to the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them to the place that I have chosen to set my name there.' Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand. O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man."

Nehemiah Secures Leave of Absence

Now I was the king's cupbearer.[68] And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it to the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence.

Wherefore the king said to me, "Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart." Then I was very sore afraid.[69]

And I said to the king, "Let the king live forever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchers, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?"

Then the king said to me, "For what dost thou make request?"

So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said to the king, "If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favor in thy sight, that thou wouldst send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' sepulchers, that I may build it." And the king said to me (the queen also sitting by him),[70] "For

how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return?" So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

Moreover I said to the king: "If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over until I come into Judah; and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the castle which belongeth to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into." And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.

But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel. So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.

Nehemiah Takes a Midnight Ride

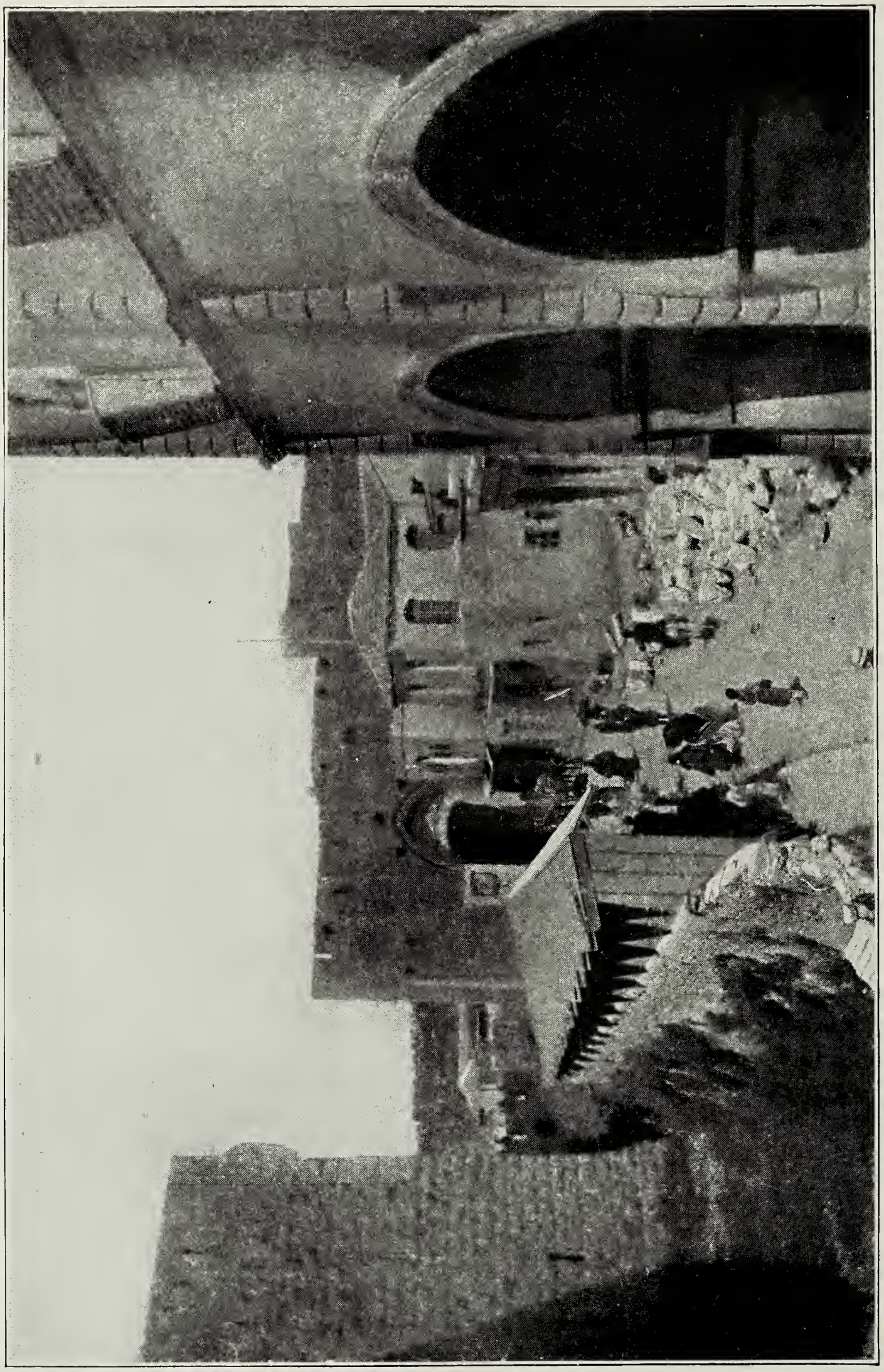
And I rose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, except the beast that I rode upon.

And I went out by night by the valley gate, even before the jackal's well, and to the dung gate, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof, which were consumed with fire. Then I went on to the fountain gate and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass. Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall; and I turned back, and entered by the valley gate, and so returned.

And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work.

NEHEMIAH VIEWING THE RUINS OF JERUSALEM
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

Then said I to them, "Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem,



THE JAFFA GATE, TODAY
From an engraving

that we be no more a reproach."[71] Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken to me.

And they said, "Let us rise up and build!" So they strengthened their hands for this good work.

But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, "What is this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king?"[72]

Then answered I them, and said to them, "The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will rise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem."

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

Old and Young, Women and Men, Build the Walls

Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they builded the sheep gate; they sanctified it, and set up the doors of it; even to the tower of Hammeah they sanctified it, to the tower of Hananel. And next to him builded the men of Jericho. And next to them builded Zaccur the son of Imri.

And the fish gate did the sons of Hassenaah build, who also laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, the bolts thereof, and the bars thereof. And next to them repaired Meremoth. And next to them repaired Meshullam. And next to them repaired Zadok. And next to them the Tekoites repaired; but their nobles put not their necks to the work of their Lord.

Moreover the old gate repaired Joiada and Meshullam. They laid the beams thereof, and set up the doors thereof, and the bolts thereof, and the bars thereof.

The valley gate repaired Hanun, and the inhabitants of Zanoah; they built it, and set up the doors thereof, the

locks thereof, and the bars thereof, and a thousand cubits on the wall to the dung gate.

And the dung gate repaired Malchijah, the ruler of Beth-haccherem: he built it, and set up the doors thereof, the bolts thereof, and the bars thereof.

And the fountain gate repaired Shallun, the ruler of the district of Mizpah; he built it, and covered it, and set up the doors thereof, the bolts thereof, and the bars thereof, and the wall of the pool of Shelah by the king's garden, and to the stairs that go down from the city of David.

From above the horse gate repaired the priests, every one over against his own house. And between the going up of the corner to the sheep gate repaired the goldsmiths and the merchants.

The Samaritans Try to Hinder

But it came to pass that, when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry and greatly provoked, and mocked the Jews. And he spoke before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, "What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish which are burned?"

Now Tobiah the Ammonite was beside him, and he said, "Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall break down their stone wall."

Hear, O our God; for we are despised: and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them up for a spoil in the land of captivity: and cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked thee to anger before the builders.

So we built the wall; and all the wall was joined together to the half[73] thereof: for the people had a mind to work. But it came to pass when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites,

heard that the repairing of the walls of Jerusalem went forward, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very angry; and conspired all of them together to come and fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it. Nevertheless we prayed to our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.

And Judah said, "The strength of the bearers of burdens fails, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall."

And our adversaries said, "They shall not know, neither see, till we come into the midst of them, and kill them, and cause the work to cease."

And it came to pass that, when the Jews who dwelt beside them came, they said to us ten times from all places, "Ye must return to us."[74]

The Builders Work Under Arms

Therefore I set in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in the open places, I set there the people according to their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

And I looked, and rose up, and said to the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, "Be ye not afraid of them: remember the Lord, who is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses."

And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one to his work.

Now it came to pass from that time forth, that half of my servants wrought in the work, and half of them held the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the coats of mail; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. They that were building the wall, and they that bore burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon; and

the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.

Then I said to the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, "The work is great and large, and we are separated on the wall, one far from another. In what place therefore ye hear the sound of the trumpet, gather ye together thither to us: our God shall fight for us."

So we labored in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared.

Likewise at the same time said I to the people, "Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and labor in the day." So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard that followed me, none of us put off his clothes, saving that every one put them off for washing.

Enemies Attempt to Frighten Nehemiah

Now it came to pass when Sanballat and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had built the wall, and that there was no breach left therein (though at that time I had not set up the doors in the gates), that Sanballat and Geshem sent to me, saying, "Come, let us meet together in one of the villages in the plain of Ono." But they thought to do me mischief.

And I sent messengers to them, saying, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, while I leave it, and come down to you?"

Yet they sent to me four times after this manner, and I answered them after the same manner.

Then Sanballat sent his servant to me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand, in which was written:

"It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews intend to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king,

according to these words. And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee in Jerusalem, saying, 'There is a king in Judah.' And now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together."

Then I sent to him, saying, "There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou art inventing them out of thine own heart."

For they all would have made us afraid, saying, "Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done."

Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

Afterward I went to the house of Shemaiah, who was shut up; and he said, "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee."

But I said, "Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in."

And lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but he pronounced this prophecy against me; and Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and so they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me.

Remember, O my God, Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and also the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, who would have put me in fear.

So the wall was finished in the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty-two days. And it came to pass that, when all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes: for they perceived that this work was wrought by our God.

Moreover in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came to them.

For there were many in Judah sworn to him, because he was son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah; and his son Jehohanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam, the son of Berechiah. Also they spoke before me of his good deeds, and they reported my words to him. And Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear.

This is the copy of the letter that they sent to him, even to Artaxerxes the king:

"Thy servants the men on this side the river, and at such a time. Be it known to the king, that the Jews which came up from thee to us are come to Jerusalem, building the rebellious and the bad city, and have set up the walls thereof, and joined the foundations.

"Be it known now to the king, that, if this city be builded, and the walls set up again, then will they not pay toll, tribute, and custom, and in the end it will be hurtful to the kings.

"Now because we have maintenance from the king's palace, and it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonor, therefore have we sent and certified the king; that search may be made in the book of the records of thy fathers: so shalt thou find in the book of the records, and know that this city is a rebellious city, and hurtful to kings and provinces, and that they have moved sedition within the same of old time: for which cause was this city destroyed.

"We certify the king that, if this city be builded again, and the walls thereof set up, by this means thou shalt have no portion on this side the river."

Then sent the king an answer: "Peace, and so forth. The letter which ye sent to us hath been plainly read before me. And I commanded, and search hath been made, and it is found that this city of old time hath made insurrection against kings, and that rebellion and sedition have been made therein. There have been mighty kings also over Jerusalem, which have ruled over all countries beyond the river; and toll, tribute, and custom was paid to them.

"Give ye now commandment to cause these men to cease, and that this city be not builded, until another commandment shall be given from me. Take heed now that ye fail not to do this: why should damage grow to the hurt of the kings?"

Nehemiah Guards the Gates

Now it came to pass, when the wall was built, and I had set up the doors, and the porters and the singers and the Levites were appointed, that I gave my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem: for he was a faithful man, and feared God above many.

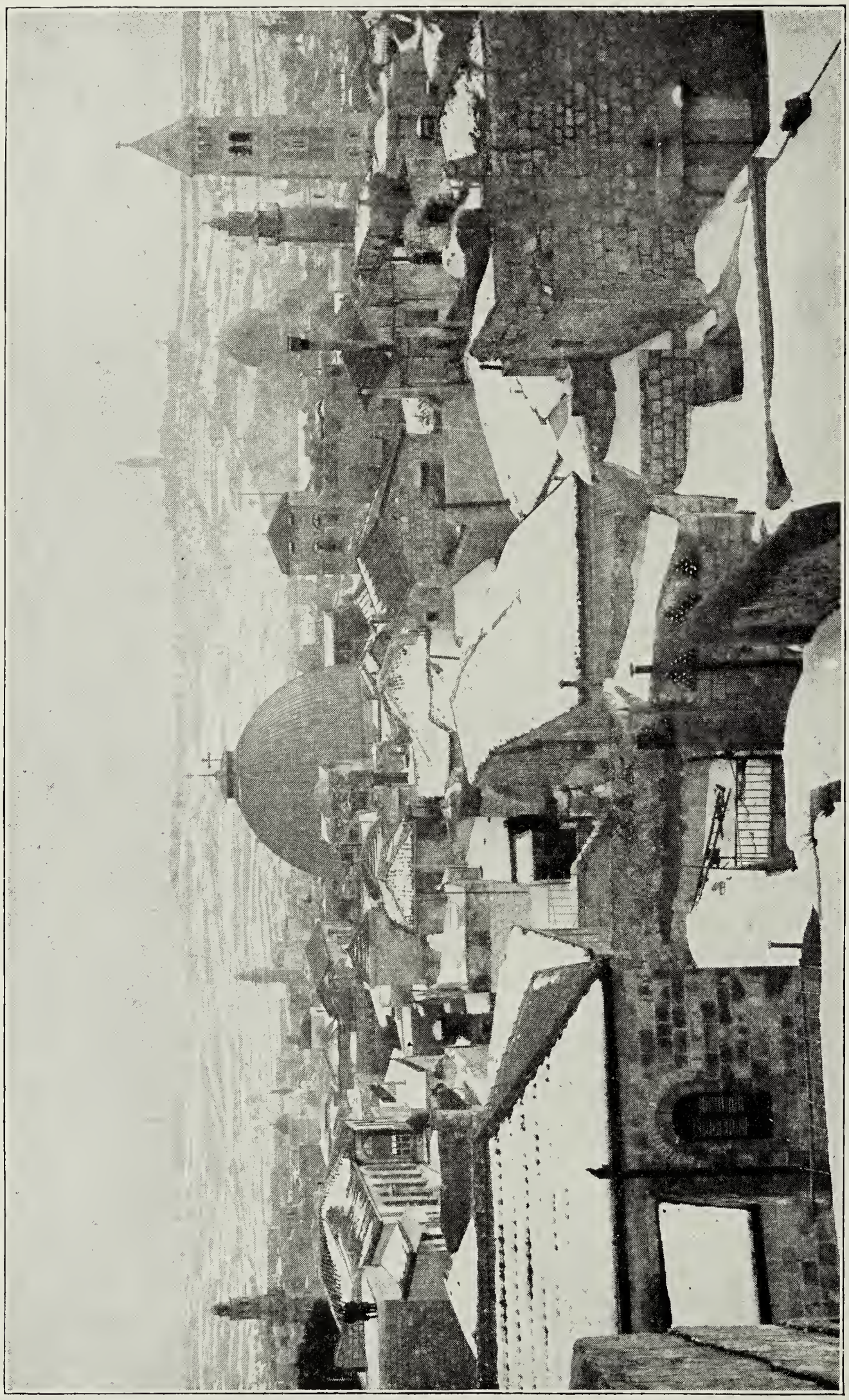
And I said to them: "Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun be hot; and while they stand on guard, let them shut the doors, and bar them: and appoint watches of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one in his watch, and every one to be over against his house." [75]

Now the city was large and great; but the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded. And my God put it in my heart to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and the people, that they might be reckoned.

THE JEWS REDEDICATE THEIR CITY

Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgivings, and with singing, with cymbals, psalteries, and with harps.

And the sons of the singers gathered themselves together, out of the plain country round about Jerusalem, and from the villages of the Netophathites: also from Beth-gilgal, and out of the fields of Geba and Azmaveth: for the singers had builded them villages round about Jerusalem. And the priests and the Levites purified themselves: and they purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.



MODERN JERUSALEM UNDER SNOW
From a photograph, American Colony, Jerusalem

Then I brought up the princes of Judah upon the wall, and appointed two great companies of them that gave thanks. One went to the right hand upon the wall toward the dung gate: and after them went Hoshaiah, and half of the princes of Judah, and certain of the priests' sons with trumpets, with the musical instruments of David, the man of God; and Ezra the scribe before them: and at the fountain gate, and straight before them, they went up by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall, above the house of David, even to the water gate eastward. And the other company of them that gave thanks went to meet them, and I after them, with the half of the people, upon the wall, above the tower of the furnaces, even to the broad wall; and above the gate of Ephraim, and by the old gate, and by the fish gate, and the tower of Hananel, and the tower of Hammeah, even to the sheep gate; and they stood still in the prison gate. So stood the two companies of them that gave thanks in the house of God, and I, and the half of the rulers with me, and the priests with trumpets.

And the singers sang aloud, with Jezrahiah their overseer. Also that day they offered great sacrifices, and rejoiced; for God had made them rejoice with great joy; and the women also and the children rejoiced; so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off.

NEHEMIAH, THE JUST GOVERNOR

He Insists upon Social Justice

There was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews. For there were that said, "We, our sons, and our daughters, are many: let us get grain, that we may eat, and live."

Some also there were that said, "We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy grain, because of the dearth."

There were also that said: "We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, upon our lands and vineyards. Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children; and, lo, we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought into bondage already: neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards."

Now I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words. Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said to them, "Ye exact usury, every one of his brother." And I held a great assembly against them.

And I said to them, "We, after our ability, have redeemed our brethren the Jews, who were sold to the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold to us?" Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer.

Also I said: "It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies? I likewise, my brethren and my servants, do lend them money and grain: I pray you, let us leave off this usury. Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their oliveyards, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them."

Then said they, "We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest."

Then I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise.

Also I shook my lap, and said, "So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labor, that performeth not this promise, even thus to be shaken out, and emptied."

And all the congregation said, "Amen," and praised the Lord. And the people did according to this promise.

Nehemiah Testifies to His Own Probity

Moreover from the time that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even to the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that is, twelve years, I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor. But the former governors that were before me were chargeable to the people, and took of them bread and wine, besides forty shekels of silver; yea, even their servants bore rule over the people; but so did not I, because of the fear of God.

Yea, also I continued in the work of this wall, neither bought we any land; and all my servants were gathered thither to the work.

Moreover there were at my table of the Jews and the rulers a hundred and fifty men, besides those that came to us from among the heathen that were round about us. Now that which was prepared for one day was one ox and six choice sheep; also fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten days store of all sorts of wine; yet for all this I demanded not the bread of the governor, because the bondage was heavy upon his people.

Think upon me, O my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people.

NEHEMIAH'S REFORMS

He Purifies the Temple

Now before this Eliashib the priest, having the oversight of the chambers of the house of our God, was allied to Tobiah. And he had prepared for him a great chamber, where formerly they laid the meal offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the tithes of the grain, the new wine, and the oil, which were given by commandment to the Levites and the singers and the gatekeepers, and the offerings for

the priests. But in all this time was I not at Jerusalem; for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I went to the king.

And after certain days I obtained leave of the king; and came to Jerusalem, and understood of the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God. And it grieved me exceedingly. Therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber.

Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers; and I again brought thither the vessels of the house of God, with the meal offering and the frankincense.

And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them; for the Levites and the singers, who did the work, were fled every one to his field. Then I contended with the rulers, and said, "Why is the house of God forsaken?" And I gathered them together, and set them in their place.

Then brought all Judah the tithe of the grain and the new wine and the oil to the treasuries. And I made treasurers over the treasuries, Shelemiah the priest, and Zadok the scribe, and of the Levites, Pedaiah; and next to them was Hanan; for they were counted faithful, and their business was to distribute to their brethren.

Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the observances thereof.

Nehemiah Reëstablishes the Sabbath

In those days saw I in Judah some treading winepresses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem, on the sabbath day; and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals. There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, who brought

fish, and all manner of merchandise, and sold on the sabbath to the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem.

Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said to them, "What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath."

And it came to pass that, when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut, and commanded that they should not be opened until after the sabbath; and some of my servants set I at the gates, that no burden should be brought in on the sabbath day.

So the merchants and sellers of all kinds of merchandise lodged without Jerusalem once or twice. Then I testified against them, and said to them, "Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands upon you." From that time forth they came no more on the sabbath.

And I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day.

Remember to me, O my God, this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy.

Nehemiah Inaugurates Other Reforms

In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab; and their children spoke half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people.

And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair, and made them swear by God, saying: "Ye shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor take of their daughters for your sons, or for yourselves. Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these

things? yet among many nations was there no king like him, and he was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless even him did foreign women cause to sin. Shall we then hearken to you to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God in marrying foreign women?"

And one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son-in-law to Sanballat the Horonite; therefore I chased him from me.

Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites.

Thus cleansed I them from all strangers, and appointed charges for the priests and for the Levites, every one in his work; and for the wood offering, at times appointed, and for the firstfruits.

Remember me, O my God, for good.

NEHEMIAH

The memorial of Nehemiah is great,
Who raised up for us the walls that were fallen,
And set up the gates and bars,
And raised up our homes again.

—*From "The Praise of Famous Men," by Sirach*

EZRA

Scribe, Priest, Reformer and Teacher

EZRA descended from the high-priestly family of Zadok. He was born in exile, became a diligent student of the law and a leading figure in a new order which grew up in the Exile among the Jews, that of the Scribes. This group of students is responsible for a revision of the religious laws of the Jews, known as the priestly code. It was doubtless this "law of God" which Ezra brought with him on his return to Jerusalem.

Ezra conceived the idea of transferring the religious center of Hebrew activity from Babylonia, land of exile, to the struggling new community at Jerusalem. He therefore led a band of these exiles, doubtless most of them members of the Scribal order, back to the home land, and secured from Artaxerxes the necessary authority to revise and purify the worship in Jerusalem. In the year 458 B.C. Ezra and a band of 1,496 men, besides women and children, made the journey across the desert, and in four months reached their destination.

Ezra now became the center and source of the great work of unifying and intensifying the religion of the Jews. One of his first acts was to separate the Jews of the reformed community from other Jews. To accomplish this "purification" it was necessary for large numbers of Jews to divorce the women whom they had married from among the people of the land. This was a troublesome and painful business, but it was put through with great faithfulness by the young priestly reformer. Probably about the year 444 B.C. he endeavored to put into operation the Book of the Law, which he had brought from Babylon. Ezra read this book before the people in solemn assembly, and secured their pledge to obey it. From now on the life of the Jews became more austere and intense. In truth, it may be said that Ezra is the founder of Judaism, for he embodied and inspired that austerity of life and that zeal for the law which has been the dominant characteristic and the glory of Judaism ever since his day. The Jews are indebted to Ezra for that cohesive power which has made them a peculiar people, and which has preserved them from the disintegrating forces that for more than two thousand years have been brought to bear against them.

The laws ascribed to Ezra have to do with the technicalities of religion. They mark the growth of that spirit that Jesus condemned in his day. To Ezra, therefore, we must trace not only the essential saving qualities of Judaism, but that growing narrowness which made religion less a matter of the heart and more a matter of form.

ARTAXERXES GRANTING LIBERTY TO THE JEWS

From a drawing by Gustave Doré

This imaginative drawing shows the magnificent capital of the Oriental monarch Artaxerxes. These exiled Jews would leave this comfort and prosperity to share the struggles of their compatriots in Jerusalem. The latter were in desperate straits, but Ezra had been raised up to restore their religion to its deserved dignity. Out of the crushed and trampled life of this period would yet arise the sweet fragrance of the most wonderful literature the world has ever known.

EZRA

After Nehemiah had revived the city's courage, rebuilt its walls and gates, reformed the unjust doings of its nobles and begun to enforce the Mosaic law, the way was open for Ezra to continue this work until the law had been established in complete form.

EZRA, THE TEACHER OF HIS PEOPLE

He Journeys to Jerusalem

IN the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra went up from Babylon. And he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God of Israel had given; and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God on him.

And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the gatekeepers, and the Nethinim, to Jerusalem. For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and ordinances.[76]

(At this point, the writer inserts the letter of Artaxerxes giving to Ezra permission to recruit the expedition, and specifying the gifts and treasures which he is to gather and take with him for the work of beautifying the temple and restoring the glory of its sacrifices.)

Blessed be the Lord God of our fathers, who hath put such a thing as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem; and hath extended mercy to me before the king and his counselors, and before all the king's mighty princes.

And I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me.

And I gathered them together to the river that runneth to Ahava; and there abode we in tents three days: and I

EZRA READING THE LAW IN THE HEARING OF THE PEOPLE
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

viewed the people, and the priests, and found there none of the sons of Levi. And I sent certain chief men with commandment to Iddo the chief at the place Casiphia; and I

told them what they should say to Iddo, and to his brethren the Nethinim, at the place Casiphia, that they should bring to us ministers for the house of our God.

Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us and for our little ones and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way; because we had spoken to the king, saying, "The hand of our God is on all them that seek him, for good; but his power and his wrath are against all those who forsake him." So we fasted and besought our God for this; and he was entreated of us.

Then we departed from the river of Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month, to go to Jerusalem: and the hand of our God was upon us, and he delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way.

And we came to Jerusalem, and abode there three days.

Ezra Reads the Law to His People

When the seventh month came, the children of Israel were in their cities. And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the broad place that was before the water gate; and they spoke to Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel.[77]

And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation, both men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the broad place that was before the water gate from early morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose.

And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it, all the people stood up. And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God; and all the people answered, "Amen! Amen!" with the lifting up of their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

And the Levites caused the people to understand the law; and the people stood in their place.

So they read in the book, in the law of God, distinctly; and they gave the sense, so that they understood the reading.[78]

And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest, the scribe, and the Levites, that taught the people, said to all the people, "This day is holy to the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep." For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.

Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions to them for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord; neither be ye grieved; for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, "Hold your peace, for the day is holy; neither be ye grieved."

And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.

Ezra Reëstablishes the Festivals

On the second day were gathered together the chiefs of the fathers of all the people, the priests and the Levites, to Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law. And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month; and that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusa-

lem, saying, "Go forth to the mount and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths," as it is written.

So the people went forth and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the broad place of the water gate, and in the broad place of the Ephraim gate. And all the assembly of those who had come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun to that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness.

Also day by day, from the first to the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the custom.

A GREAT POPULAR RESPONSE

Israel Makes a New Covenant with Jehovah

Moreover, in addition to all this, we made a sure covenant and wrote it out, and our nobles, our Levites, and our priests sealed to it.

And all those who had separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, every one having knowledge and having understanding, they clave to a solemn obligation, and to an oath, to walk in God's law which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our God, and his judgments and his statutes; and that we would not give our daughters to the peoples of the land, nor take their daughters as wives for our sons; and, if the peoples of the land bring wares or any victuals on the sabbath day to sell, that we would not

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TOMB OF EZRA

If tradition is true, Ezra sleeps in the land of captivity "by the waters of Babylon." The dome of Persian tiles, rising above the rustling palms, covers the tomb. Like precious seed for a new sowing, the exiled Jews in Babylon were preserved during the political whirlwind which followed the death of Nebuchadnezzar. From this seed sprang Ezra, the teacher and reformer, who may well be called the founder of Judaism. Under him the new temple, with the reinstated service, became the bridge that spanned the gulf of exile.

buy of them on the sabbath or on a holy day: and that we would forego the seventh year [the cultivating of the land] and the exaction of any debt.

Also we made ordinances for us, to charge ourselves yearly the third part of a shekel for the service of the house of our God, for the showbread, and for the continual meal offering and for the continual burnt offering, for the sabbaths, for the new moons, for the fixed feasts, and for the holy things, and for the sin offerings to make an atonement for Israel, and for all the work of the house of our God.[79]

And the princes of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: the rest of the people also cast lots, to bring one of ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts to dwell in the other cities. And the people blessed all the men that willingly offered themselves to dwell in Jerusalem.

MERCY IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE

Even in these days of formal worship there were not lacking prophets to remind the Hebrews that God prefers mercy to words, and right living to sacrifices.

Behold, ye fast for strife and debate,
And to smite with the fist of wickedness:
Ye shall not fast as ye do this day,
To make your voice to be heard on high.

Is it such, the fast that I have chosen?
A day for a man to afflict his soul?
Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush,
And to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?
Wilt thou call this a fast,
And a day acceptable to the Lord?

Is not this the fast that I have chosen:
To loose the bonds of wickedness,

To undo the heavy burdens,
And to let the oppressed go free,
And that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry,
And that thou bring the poor that are cast out to
thy house?
When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him;
And that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?

Then shall thy light break forth as the morning,
And thy health shall spring forth speedily,
And thy righteousness shall go before thee,
And the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward.
Then shalt thou call, and the Lord will answer,
Thou shalt cry, and he shall say, "Here am I."

JUDAS MACCABEUS

The Fierce Champion of Religious Freedom

JUDAS MACCABEUS is the great patriot of Hebrew history. To understand the rôle he played one must review the history of the second century before Christ, when occurred that life-or-death struggle for religious freedom in which Judaism all but perished.

The trouble begins innocently enough with Alexander the Great. That young genius not only conquered the East, but made it his ambition to Hellenize the East. From his day on, Greek influence was paramount in Western Asia. That influence impressed itself upon Antiochus IV, called Epiphanes, and made of him an apostle and a persecutor. Everything Greek was his passion. He became a religious fanatic of the worst kind.

He imagined that Judaism was a notion that he could easily snuff out. He therefore made proclamation that all Jewish religious customs should cease; there should be no more Sabbath, no circumcision, no clean and unclean food, no sacrifice to Jehovah; and whoever should be found to possess the "book of the law" should be put to death. Forthwith he sent an army of twenty-two thousand men to carry his edict into effect. Taking advantage of the Jewish refusal to fight on the Sabbath, his troops entered Jerusalem, dismantled the temple, pulled down the walls, looted and burned the homes, and sold into slavery hordes of women and children. Then, adding insult to injury, in December, 168 B.C., he built an altar to the Olympian Zeus in the place of Jehovah's great altar of sacrifice; put up in the sacred precinct a statue to the same deity, and by force compelled the Jews to worship it with offerings of swine's flesh. This statue of Zeus was what the Book of Daniel calls "the abomination of desolation." It marks a point of despair below which a Jew could not descend.

A savior now appears. During the persecutions an aged priest named Mattathias, with his five sons, had withdrawn to his country residence at Modin on the western borders of Judah. When the officer of the king, hunting for victims, required Mattathias as the head man of the town to offer the first sacrifice to Zeus, the old man flew upon him in a rage and killed him. He ran a sword through the royal commissioner, threw down the altar, and issued his call to the men of Modin: "Whosoever is zealous for the law and loyal to the covenant, let him follow me." Thereupon the gallant leader, his five sons and other daring men fled to the wilderness, and proclaimed war to the death against the persecutor. The rough life was too much for the old man, however, and

he soon died, having first named his son Simon as chief counselor, and his son Judas as captain. Time revealed the father's good judgment; for Simon was indeed wise, and Judas a born leader, whose marvelous success won for him the name Maccabeus, the Hammerer.

The cause of Judas seemed hopeless. His followers were largely untrained, unequipped, and without morale. Opposed to these were the trained armies of a powerful state, reinforced by Greek mercenaries with bronze armor and the best weapons made, and led by generals who had acquired skill in world-wide campaigns. On every field the Syrians outnumbered the Jews six to one. Against them Judas could oppose only a desperate courage, a band of loyal and ragged followers, a superior knowledge of the wilderness and the mountain strongholds of Judea, belief in his own ability to inspire, plan, and execute, and an undying faith in God.

The king of Syria did not propose to be thwarted by such a band of guerillas. He sent his general, Apollonius, with an army to annihilate them. Judas and his ragged handful met the army near Samaria and defeated it. The bodies of the slain furnished him with clothing and weapons. A larger army was at once sent down under another general, Seron. Judas beat him also at Beth-horon. Antiochus next launched against him half his entire military strength, an army of fifty thousand men under three of his most accomplished generals. So confident were the Syrians of victory that they had brought with them merchants to buy the Jewish slaves whom they expected to get, and even posted the prices of these uncaptured slaves in the neighboring cities. Judas routed them at Mizpah with six thousand men. Chagrined beyond measure at the defeat of his generals, Lysias himself, the regent of the kingdom, took the field with five thousand cavalry and sixty thousand infantry. At Bethsura, at the upper end of that vale of Elah where David slew Goliath, Judas fought the Syrian to a standstill and obliged him to withdraw.

While Lysias was refitting his shattered battalions, Judas took Jerusalem, cleansed the temple of its defilement, destroyed the "abomination of desolation," built a new altar to Jehovah, furnished new vessels, and on December 25, 165 B.C., rededicated the temple to the service of the God of Israel. This memorable date became a national holiday forever after, known in Christ's time as the Feast of Dedication, but in ours as the Feast of Lights.

The death of Antiochus Epiphanes now enabled Judas to take the offensive. He vanquished the Idumeans, hereditary foes on the south, the Ammonites on the east, and all the Syrian country as far as Damascus. In an incredibly short time this peasant warrior had won more victories against greater odds than any other leader in Hebrew history.

Internal troubles in Syria finally opened the way for negotiations, and at last a truce. But a contest over the high-priesthood brought the

Syrians back; and Judas, who had taken the field against them, was defeated and killed, 161 B.C.

Judas Maccabeus possessed courage, inexhaustible energy, unflinching determination, power to inspire enthusiasm, and military skill that amounted to genius. He was the savior of the Jewish faith and the Jewish race. His work was carried on by his brothers until at last, under Simon, absolute independence was won. The year 143 B.C. is the year 1 of Jewish independence, and the beginning of a prosperity which, though brief, was greater than the Jews had ever before known.

A BALLAD OF HEROES

Because you passed, and now are not—
Because in some remoter day
Your sacred dust in doubtful spot
Was blown of ancient airs away—
Because you perished—must men say
Your deeds were naught, and so profane
Your lives with that cold burden? Nay,
The deeds you wrought are not in vain.

Though it may be, above the plot
That hid your once imperial clay,
No greener than o'er men forgot
The unregarding grasses sway;
Though there no sweeter is the lay
Of careless bird; though you remain
Without distinction of decay,
The deeds you wrought are not in vain.

No, for while yet in tower or cot
Your story stirs the pulse's play,
And men forget the sordid lot—
The sordid cares—of cities gray;
While yet they grow for homelier fray
More strong from you, as reading plain
That life may go, if honor stay,
The deeds you wrought are not in vain.

—*Austin Dobson*

THE VICTORY OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT AT ISSUS
From an ancient mosaic
National Museum, Naples

THE MACCABEES

How an Aged Priest and His Five Sons Made Judah Independent

For a century after Nehemiah the Jews lived quietly in their own country, observing their religion and seldom disturbed by their overlords, the Persians. Then Alexander the Great conquered the world. He founded in Egypt the great city of Alexandria, which became the center of Greek learning. On his death Egypt, with the Holy Land, was seized by Ptolemy, one of Alexander's generals; another general, Seleucus, taking Syria and Babylonia. The Ptolemies and the Seleucids fought for possession of Palestine, and eventually the Seleucid kings made it their own. Under these kings Greek life and thought became popular in Palestine. The faithful Jews resisted its influence, the fight coming to a head when the Seleucid king, Antiochus IV of Syria, determined by force to establish Greek heathenism in Jerusalem and blot out the worship of Jehovah. The stirring account of the rebellion that followed under the leadership of the Maccabees is here recounted.

THE OUTRAGES OF ANTIOCHUS IV

AND it came to pass, after that Alexander the Macedonian, the son of Philip, smote Darius king of the Persians and Medes, that he reigned in his stead. He fought many battles and won many strongholds, and slew the kings of the earth; he went on to the ends of the earth, and took booty from a multitude of nations. And when the earth was at peace before him, he gathered together an exceedingly great army, and ruled over countries and peoples and principalities; and they became tributary to him.

And after these things he fell sick, and perceived that he should die. And he called his servants, who were honorable, who had been brought up with him from his youth, and he divided to them his kingdom while he was yet alive. And his servants bore rule, each one in his place. And they

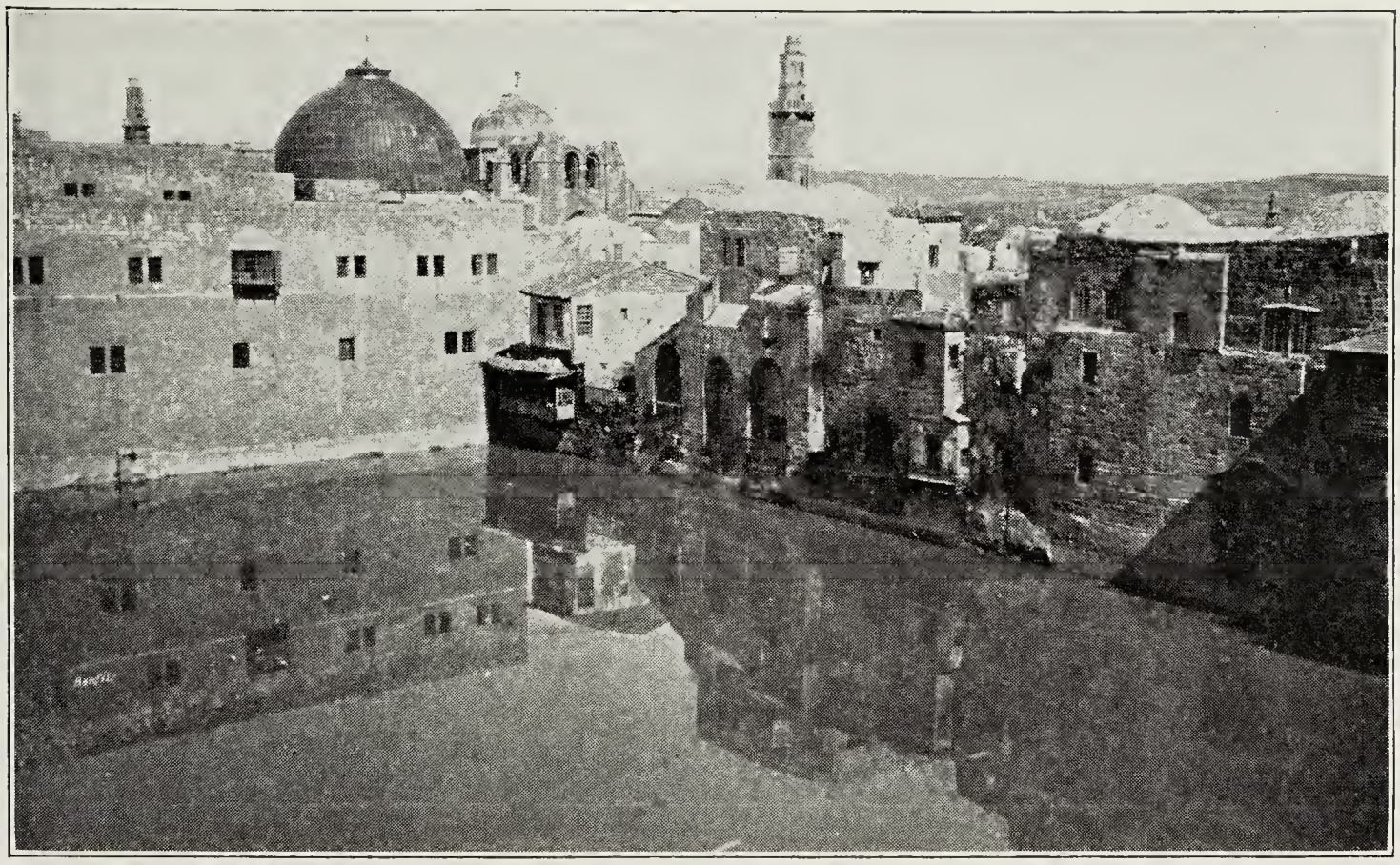
all put diadems upon themselves after that he was dead, and so did their sons after them many years: and they multiplied evils in the earth.

And there came forth out of them a sinful root, Antiochus Epiphanes, son of Antiochus the king, who had been a hostage at Rome, and he reigned in the hundred and thirty-seventh year of the kingdom of the Greeks.

And Antiochus, after that he had smitten Egypt, returned, and went up against Israel and Jerusalem with a great multitude, and entered presumptuously into the sanctuary, and took the golden altar, and the candlesticks of the light, and all that pertained thereto, and the table of the showbread, and the cups to pour withal, and the bowls, and the golden censers, and the veil, and the crowns, and the adorning of gold which was on the face of the temple, and he scaled it all off. And he took the silver and the gold and the precious vessels; and he took the hidden treasures which he found. And when he had taken all, he went away into his own land, and he made a great slaughter, and spoke very presumptuously.

And there came great mourning upon Israel,
And the rulers and elders groaned;
The virgins and young men were made feeble,
And the beauty of the women was changed.
Every bridegroom took up lamentation,
She that sat in the marriage-chamber was in heaviness.
And the land was moved for the inhabitants thereof,
And all the house of Jacob was clothed with shame.

After two years the king sent a chief collector of tribute to the cities of Judah, who came to Jerusalem with a great multitude. And he spoke words of peace to deceive them, and they trusted him. Then he attacked the city suddenly, and inflicted a severe blow on it, and destroyed many Israelites. And he took the booty of the city, and set it on



POOL OF HEZEKIAH, JERUSALEM

The black dome and the stunted tower belong to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. They mark the focal point of Christendom, for the possession of which the Crusaders fought and the sects are still fighting. The minaret in the center marks the Mosque of Omar, built near the spot where the Arab conqueror of Jerusalem said his prayers of thanksgiving. A courteous knight as well as a soldier, he refused to enter the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, knowing that if he entered, his followers would convert the most sacred shrine of Christendom into a Mohammedan place of worship. Because of this act of courtesy, the Holy Sepulcher has always remained Christian in the midst of a Mohammedan city.

The sky line of Mount Scopus, to the right of the minaret, will some day be dominated by the Hebrew University designed to be the world center of Hebrew life. The corner stone of this building was laid during the Great War in July, 1918. No more sightly place could be found than this, nor one more inspiring. Within the broad panorama seen from Mount Scopus lie some of the most significant places in the Holy Land.

fire, and pulled down its houses and walls on every side. They took captive the women and the children, and gained possession of the cattle. They walled in the city of David with a great and strong wall, with strong towers, and it served as a citadel. And they put there sinful people, lawless men.[80] And they fortified themselves in it.

> And they shed innocent blood on every side of the sanctuary, and polluted the sanctuary.
> Then the inhabitants of Jerusalem fled because of this,

And she became the habitation of foreigners.
And she became strange to those who were born in her,
And her children forsook her.
Her sanctuary was laid waste like a wilderness.

Gustave Doré

MATTATHIAS AND THE APOSTATE

And king Antiochus wrote to the whole kingdom, that all should be one people, and that each should forsake his own laws. And the king sent letters by the hand of messengers to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, that they should follow laws strange to the land, and should profane the sabbaths and feasts, and pollute the sanctuary; that they should build altars and temples and shrines for idols, and should sacrifice swine's flesh and unclean beasts; so that they might forget the law, and change all the ordinances. "Whosoever shall not do according to the word of the king, he shall die."[81]

THE REVOLT OF MATTATHIAS AND HIS SONS

Mattathias Refuses to Sacrifice to Foreign Gods

In those days rose up Mattathias the priest, who dwelt at Modin. And he had five sons, John, Simon, Judas, who was called Maccabeus [The Hammerer], Eleazar and Jonathan. And he saw the blasphemies that were committed in Judah and in Jerusalem, and he said, "Woe is me! wherefore was I born, to see the destruction of my people and of the holy city? Wherefore should we live any longer?"

And Mattathias and his sons rent their clothes, and put on sackcloth and mourned exceedingly.

And the king's officers came into the city of Modin to sacrifice. And they spoke to Mattathias, saying: "Thou art a ruler and an honorable and great man in this city, and strengthened with sons and brethren: now therefore come thou first and do the commandment of the king, as all the nations have done, and the men of Judah, and they that remain in Jerusalem; and thou and thy house shall be in the number of the king's friends, and thou and thy sons shall be honored with silver and gold and many gifts."

But Mattathias answered and said with a loud voice: "If all the nations that are in the house of the king's

MATTATHIAS APPEALING TO THE JEWISH REFUGEES
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

dominion hearken to him, to fall away each one from the worship of his fathers, and have made choice to follow his commandments, yet will I and my sons and my brethren walk

in the covenant of our fathers. We will not hearken to the king's words, to go aside from our worship, on the right hand, or on the left."

And when he had left speaking these words, there came a Jew in the sight of all to sacrifice on the altar which was at Modin, according to the king's commandment. And Mattathias saw it, and his zeal was kindled, and he showed forth his wrath, and ran and slew him upon the altar. And the king's officer, who compelled men to sacrifice, he killed at that time, and pulled down the altar. And he cried with a loud voice, "Whosoever is zealous for the law, let him come forth after me!"

Then many that sought after justice and judgment went down into the wilderness, to dwell there, because their troubles increased against them.[82]

And the king's servants, and the troops that were at Jerusalem pursued after them and made war on them on the sabbath day. And the others neither cast a stone at them, nor stopped up the hiding places, saying, "Let us die in our innocence."

So they perished, with their wives and children and cattle, to the number of a thousand people.

The Rebellion Is Successful

When Mattathias and his friends knew it, they mourned bitterly over them. And they said to each other, "If we all do as our brothers have done, and do not fight against the heathen for our lives and our customs, they will now quickly destroy us from off the earth."

So they took counsel that day, saying, "Whoever shall come against us for battle on the sabbath day, let us fight against him, and we will by no means all die, as our brothers died in the hiding places."

Then there gathered together to them a company of Hasideans,[83] brave men of Israel, every one who offered

himself willingly for the law. And all who fled from the evils were added to them, and strengthened them. And they mustered a host:

They smote the sinners in their anger,
And the lawless in their wrath.

And the rest fled to the heathen for safety. Also Mattathias and his friends went about and pulled down the altars, as many as they found in the territory of Israel.

Thus they pursued the sons of arrogance, and the work prospered in their hand. They took the direction of affairs out of the hands of the heathen and of the kings, nor did they yield ground to the sinner.[84]

Mattathias Bequeaths a Legacy to His Sons

When the time approached for Mattathias to die, he said to his sons: "Now insolence and insult have grown strong, and a period of reversals has come, with flaming wrath.

"Now, my sons, be zealous for the law,
And give your lives for the covenant of your fathers.
And remember the deeds which your forefathers did in their generations;
And win great glory and everlasting fame.
Was not Abraham found faithful when tested?
And it was counted to him as righteousness.

Then, my sons, be strong;
Show yourselves men in behalf of the law;
By so doing you shall obtain glory.

And behold, Simon your brother,
I know that he is a man of counsel;
Obey him always; let him be your adviser.

JERASH IN GILEAD

The ruins of Jerash (ancient Gerasa) lie high on the plateau above the Jabbok, about a two-hours' climb from the ford where Jacob wrestled with the angel. This city of the Decapolis was once the home of at least forty thousand people. In the foreground of the picture one sees the circular forum with many of its columns still intact; one sees the colonnaded street, ruins of great baths, theaters, temples, all the monumental equipment of a great Græco-Roman city. A diminishing water supply and the decay of Roman power caused the population to migrate. Earthquakes, the Arab and the Cireassian have finished the destruction. The present inhabitants number only a few hundred.

Judas Maccabeus, too, hath been a man of war from his
youth;
He shall be your captain,
And fight the battle of the people.
And take to yourselves all law-abiding men,
And avenge the wrong of your people.
Render a recompense to the heathen,
And give heed to the commands of the law."

Thus he blessed them, and was gathered to his fathers.

THE CAREER OF JUDAS MACCABEUS

He Was Renowned to the Ends of the Earth

Then his son Judas, who was called Maccabeus, rose up in his place. And all his brothers helped him, as did all those who had supported his father, and they fought with gladness the battle of Israel.

He spread far and wide the fame of his glory
And put on his breastplate like a giant,
And girded on his weapons of war,
And set battles in array,
Protecting the army with his sword.
He was like a lion in his deeds,
And as a lion's whelp roaring for prey;
He pursued the lawless, seeking them out,
And he burnt up those who troubled his people.
The lawless shrunk for fear of him,
And all the workers of lawlessness were greatly terrified;
And deliverance was attained through him.
He angered many kings,
And made Jacob glad with his acts;
And his memory is blessed forever.
He went about among the cities of Judah,
And destroyed the godless from the land,
And turned away the wrath of God from Israel.
And he was renowned to the ends of the earth.

Judas Wins Against Great Odds

Apollonius gathered the Gentiles together, and a great host from Samaria, to fight against Israel. And Judas perceived it, and he went forth to meet him, and smote him, and slew him; and many fell wounded to death, and the rest fled.

And they took much booty, and Judas took the sword of Apollonius, and therewith he fought all his days.

Then Seron, the commander of the host of Syria, heard that Judas had gathered an assembly of faithful men with him, and of such as went out to war. And he went up with a mighty army of the ungodly to take vengeance on the children of Israel.

And Judas went forth to meet him with a small company. But when they saw the army coming to meet them they said to Judas, "What, shall we be able, being a small company, to fight against so great and strong a multitude? and we for our part are faint, having tasted no food this day."

But Judas said, "It is an easy thing for many to be given into the hands of a few; and with heaven it is all one, to save by many or by few: for victory in battle standeth not in the multitude of a host; but strength is from heaven."

Now when he had left off speaking, he leapt suddenly upon them, and Seron and his army were discomfited before him. And they pursued them in the going down of Beth-horon to the plain, and there fell of them about eight hundred men; but the residue fled into the land of the Philistines.

And the fear of Judas and his brothers, and the dread of them, began to fall upon the nations round about them; and his name came near even to the king, and every nation told of the battles of Judas.

But when king Antiochus heard these words, he was full of indignation: and he sent and gathered together all the forces of his realm, an exceeding strong army. And he opened his treasury, and gave his forces pay for a year, and commanded them to be ready for every need.

And he saw that the money failed for his treasures, and that the taxes of the country were small, because of the dissension and plague which he had brought upon the land. And he determined to go into Persia, and to seize the tributes of the countries and to gather much money. And he left Lysias, one of the royal family, to be over the affairs of the king, and to bring up his son Antiochus until he returned.

Judas Is Victorious over Lysias

Now Lysias chose Ptolemy the son of Dorymenes, and Nicanor, and Gorgias, influential men among the king's friends, and with them sent forty thousand footmen and seven thousand horsemen, to go into the land of Judah to destroy it, as the king had ordered. And they set out with all their army and pitched their camp near Emmaus in the plain. And the merchants of the country heard the rumors about them, and taking silver and gold in large quantities, and shackles, they came into the camp to get the Israelites for slaves. There were added to them also the forces of Syria and of the Philistines.

Then Judas and his brothers saw that evils were increasing and that the forces were encamping in their territory, and when they learned of the commands which the king had given to destroy the people and make an end of them, they said to each other:

"Let us raise up the ruin of our people,
And let us fight for our people and the sanctuary!"

So they gathered together and came to Mizpah, opposite Jerusalem; for in Mizpah there was a place of prayer for Israel. And they fasted that day, and put sackcloth and ashes on their heads and tore their clothes, and spread out the book of the law, one of those in which the heathen had been painting images of their idols.

And Judas said to them that were building houses, and were betrothing wives, and were planting vineyards, and were fearful, that they should return, each man to his own house, according to the law.[85]

And the army removed and encamped to the south of Emmaus. And Gorgias took five thousand footmen and a thousand chosen horses; and the force removed by night, that it might fall upon the Jewish army and smite them suddenly.

And Judas heard of it; and he withdrew, he and his

EMMAUS

warriors, that he might smite the king's host that was left at Emmaus, while the forces were dispersed from the camp.

And Gorgias came into the camp of Judas by night and found no man; and he sought them in the mountains; and he said, "These men flee from us." But as soon as it was day, Judas appeared in the plain with three thousand men; howbeit they had not armor nor swords such as they wished.

Then Judas said to the men that were with him: "Fear ye not their multitude, neither be ye afraid of their onset. Remember how our fathers were saved in the Red Sea, when Pharaoh pursued them with a host. Let us now cry to heaven, if he will pity us, and will remember the covenant of our fathers; and all the Gentiles shall know that there is one that redeemeth and saveth Israel."

And the strangers went out of the camp to battle. And they that were with Judas sounded their trumpets, and joined battle, and the Gentiles were discomfited, and fled into the plain.

And Judas and his host returned from pursuing them, and he said to the people, "Be not greedy of the booty, inasmuch as there is yet a battle before us."

While Judas was yet speaking, there appeared a part of them looking over the mountain; and they saw that their host had been put to flight, and that the Jews were burning the camp. When they perceived these things, they were sore afraid, and perceiving also the army of Judas ready for battle in the plain, they fled all of them into the land of the Philistines.

And Judas returned to take the booty of the camp, and they got much gold and silver, and blue and sea-purple, and great riches.

Then they returned home, and sang a song of thanksgiving, and gave praise to heaven, because

"His mercy is good,
His mercy endureth forever."

And Israel had a great deliverance that day.

And the next year Lysias gathered together sixty thousand chosen footmen, and five thousand horse. And they came into Idumea and encamped at Bethsura. And Judas met them with ten thousand men. And they joined battle; and there fell of the army of Lysias about five thousand men.

Now when Lysias saw that his array was put to flight, and the boldness that had come upon them that were with Judas, and how they were ready either to live or to die nobly, he removed to Antioch, and began to gather together hired soldiers, that he might come again into Judea with even a greater army.[86]

Judas Purifies the Holy Place

Now Judas and his brethren said, "Behold, our enemies are discomfited; let us go up to cleanse the holy place and to dedicate it afresh."

And all the army was gathered together, and they went up to mount Sion. And they saw the sanctuary laid desolate, and the altar profaned, and the gates burned up, and shrubs growing in the court as in a forest, and the priests' chambers pulled down. And they rent their clothes, and made great lamentations, and put ashes upon their heads, and fell on their faces to the ground, and cried toward heaven.

Then Judas chose blameless priests, and they cleansed the holy place. And they built a new altar after the fashion of the former; and they built the holy place, and the inner parts of the house; and they hallowed the courts.

And they offered sacrifice according to the law, upon the new altar of burnt offerings which they had made. At what time and on what day the Gentiles had profaned it, even on that day was it dedicated afresh, with songs, and harps, and lutes, and with cymbals. And all the people fell upon their faces, and worshiped, and gave praise to heaven, which had given them good success. And they kept the dedication

of the altar eight days, and offered burnt offerings with gladness, and sacrificed a sacrifice of deliverance and praise. And there was exceeding great gladness among the people, and the reproach of the Gentiles was turned away.

And at that season they built up mount Sion with high walls and strong towers round about, lest the Gentiles should come and tread them down, as they had done aforetime. And Judas set there a force to keep it; and they fortified Bethsura to keep it, as a defense against Idumea [on the south].

Judas Rescues the Jews of Galilee and Gilead

And Judas fought against the children of Esau in Idumea, because they besieged Israel; and he smote them with a great slaughter. And he passed over to the children of Ammon, and found a mighty band and much people, with Timotheus for their leader. And he fought many battles with them, and they were discomfited before him: and he smote them, and got possession of Jazer and its villages, and returned into Judea.

And the Gentiles that were in Gilead gathered themselves together against the Israelites that were on their borders, to destroy them. And they fled into the stronghold of Dathema, and sent letters to Judas and his brothers, saying, "Come and deliver us from the hand of Timotheus and his host."

While the letters were yet reading, behold, there came other messengers from Galilee with their clothes rent, bringing the report that there were gathered against them those of Ptolemais and of Tyre, and of Sidon, and all Galilee of the Gentiles, to consume them.

When Judas and the people heard these words, there assembled a great congregation to consult what they should do for their brethren that were in tribulation. And Judas said to Simon his brother, "Choose thee out men, and go and deliver thy brethren that are in Galilee, but I and Jonathan

my brother will go into the land of Gilead." And he left Joseph and Azarias as leaders of the people, to hold Judea. And he gave commandment to them, saying, "Take ye the charge of this people, and fight no battle with the Gentiles until we come again."

And to Simon were allotted three thousand men to go into Galilee, but to Judas eight thousand men to go into the land of Gilead.

And Simon went into Galilee, and fought many battles with the Gentiles and discomfited them. And he pursued them unto the gate of Ptolemais; and there fell of the Gentiles about three thousand men; and he took their booty. And they took to them those that were in Galilee, with their wives and their children, and all that they had, and brought them into Judea with great gladness.

And Judas Maccabeus and his brother Jonathan passed over Jordan and went three days' journey in the wilderness. And they met with the Nabatheans [Bedouins]; and these met them peaceably and told them how the Jews were shut up in the cities of Gilead, and that the enemy had determined the next day to encamp against the strongholds and to take them, and to destroy all those men in one day.

And Judas and his army turned suddenly by the way of the desert unto Bosora; and he took the city and burned it with fire. And he went from there by night, until he came to the stronghold [of Dathema].

And the morning came; and they saw, and behold, a vast company bearing ladders and engines of war to take the stronghold; and they were fighting against them. And Judas saw that the battle was begun, and that the cry of the city went up to heaven.

And Judas said to the men of his host, "Fight this day for your brethren!" And he went forth behind them in three companies; and they sounded with their trumpets and cried out in prayer. And the army of Timotheus perceived that it

was Maccabeus, and they fled from before him: and he smote them with a great slaughter; and there fell of them on that day about eight thousand men.

An Army Is Panic-stricken by Judas's Boldness

Now after these things Timotheus gathered another army, an exceeding great host, and encamped over against Raphon beyond the brook. And Judas went to meet them.

And Timotheus said to the captains of his host when Judas and his army drew nigh to the brook of water, "If he pass over first to us, we shall not be able to withstand him; for he will mightily prevail against us: but if he be afraid, and encamp beyond the river, we will cross over to him, and prevail against him."

Now when Judas came nigh to the brook of water, he crossed over the first against them, and all the people after him: and all the Gentiles were discomfited before his face, and cast away their arms, and fled into the temple at Carnaim.

Judas Meets an Army of a Hundred Thousand Men

And when the king heard this, he was angry, and gathered together all his friends, even the generals of his host, and the captains of the horse. And there came to him from other kingdoms, and from isles of the sea, bands of hired soldiers. And the number of his forces was a hundred thousand footmen, and twenty thousand horsemen, and two and thirty elephants trained for war. And they went through Idumea, and encamped against Bethsura, and fought against it many days, and made engines of war; and they of Bethsura came out, and burned them with fire, and fought valiantly.

And Judas removed from the citadel, and encamped at Beth-zacharias, over against the king's camp. And the king rose early in the morning, and removed his army at full speed along the road to Beth-zacharias, and his forces

made them ready to battle, and sounded the trumpets. And they showed the elephants the blood of grapes and mulberries, that they might prepare them for the battle.

JUDAS MACCABEUS PURSUING TIMOTHEUS
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

And they divided the beasts among the phalanxes, and they set by each elephant a thousand men armed with coats of mail, and helmets of brass on their heads; and for each elephant were appointed five hundred chosen horsemen. These were ready beforehand, wheresoever the elephant was; and whithersoever the elephant went, they went with him; they departed not from him. And towers of wood were upon them, strong and covered, one upon each elephant, girt fast upon him with cunning contrivances; and upon each elephant were two and thirty valiant men that fought

upon him, besides his driver (and the rest of the horsemen he set on this side and that side at the two parts of the army), striking terror into the enemy, and protected by the phalanxes. Now when the sun shone upon the shields of gold and brass, the mountains shone therewith, and blazed like torches of fire.

And a part of the king's army was spread upon the high mountains, and some on the low ground, and they went on firmly and in order. And all that heard the noise of their multitude, and the marching of the multitude, and the rattling of the arms, trembled: for the army was exceeding great and strong.

And Judas and his army drew near for battle, and there fell of the king's army six hundred men. And Eleazar, who was called Avaran, saw one of the elephants armed with royal breastplates, and he was higher than all the elephants, and the king seemed to be upon him; and he determined to deliver his people, and to get him an everlasting name; and he ran upon him courageously into the midst of the phalanx, and slew on the right hand and on the left, and they parted asunder from him on this side and on that. And he crept under the elephant, and thrust him from beneath, and slew him; and the elephant fell to the earth upon him, and he died there.

And they [the Jews] saw the strength of the kingdom, and the fierce onset of the hosts, and they retreated.

Judas Defeats Nicanor and Cuts off His Head

But they of the king's army went up to Jerusalem to meet them, and the king encamped before mount Sion. And he made peace with them of Bethsura, and appointed a garrison there to keep it. And he encamped against the sanctuary many days and prepared to capture it.

(At this juncture Lysias heard that Philip had returned to Antioch and taken charge of the capital. He therefore raised the siege of the

sanctuary, gave the Jews leave to continue in the strict observance of their laws, and returned with the young king to meet his rival. Both he and Antiochus were soon slain at the instigation of Demetrius, a new claimant, who now became the king of Syria. Alcimus, a renegade Jew,

DEATH OF ELEAZAR

From a drawing by Gustave Doré

candidate for the high-priesthood, after stirring up much opposition to Judas, went to Demetrius and sought to instigate him against Judas and his followers.)

And the king sent Nicanor, one of his honorable princes, a man that hated Israel and was their enemy, and commanded him to destroy the people. And Nicanor came to Jerusalem with a great host; and he sent to Judas and his brethren deceitfully with words of peace, saying, "Let there be no battle between me and you; I will come with a few men, that I may see your faces in peace."

So he came to Judas, and they saluted one another peaceably. And the enemies were ready to take away Judas by violence. But the thing was known to Judas, that he came to him with deceit, and he was sore afraid of him, and would see his face no more.

And Nicanor knew that his counsel was discovered; and he went out to meet Judas in battle, and there fell of Nicanor's side about five hundred men, and they fled into the city of David.

After these things Nicanor went up to mount Sion: and there came some of the priests of the sanctuary, and some of the elders of the people, to salute him peaceably, and to show him the whole burnt sacrifice that was being offered for the king. And he mocked them, and laughed at them, and entreated them shamefully, and spoke haughtily, and swore in a rage, saying, "Unless Judas and his army be now delivered into my hands, it shall be that, if I come again in peace, I will burn up this house": and he went out in a great rage.

And the priests entered in, and stood before the altar and the temple; and they wept, and said: "Thou didst choose this house to be called by thy name, to be a house of prayer and supplication for thy people: take vengeance on this man and his army, and let them fall by the sword: remember their blasphemies, and suffer them not to live any longer."

JUDAS MACCABEUS BEFORE NICANOR'S ARMY
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

And Nicanor went forth from Jerusalem, and encamped in Beth-horon, and there joined him the host of Syria.

And Judas encamped with three thousand men: and Judas prayed and said: "When they that came from the king[87] blasphemed, thine angel went out, and smote among them a hundred and fourscore and five thousand. Even so discomfit thou this army before us today, and let all the rest know that he hath spoken wickedly against thy sanctuary, and judge thou him according to his wickedness."

And on the thirteenth day of the month Adar the armies joined battle: and Nicanor's army was discomfited, and he himself was the first to fall in the battle. Now when his army saw that Nicanor was fallen, they cast away their arms, and fled. And the Jews pursued after them a day's journey,

and they sounded an alarm after them with the solemn trumpets. And they came forth out of all the villages of Judea round about, and hemmed them in on every side, so that they all fell by the sword, and there was not one of them left. And they took the booty, and they smote off Nicanor's head, and his right hand, which he stretched out so haughtily, and brought them, and hanged them up beside Jerusalem. And the people were exceeding glad, and they kept that day as a day of great gladness. And they ordained to keep this day year by year, the thirteenth day of Adar.

And the land of Judah had rest a little while.

Judas Makes a Treaty with Rome

And Judas heard of the fame of the Romans, that they are valiant men, and have pleasure in all that join themselves to them, and make a league with all such as come to them. And they told him of their wars and exploits which they did among the Gauls, and how that they conquered them, and brought them under tribute; and what things they did in the land of Spain, that they might become masters of the mines of silver and gold which were there; and how by their policy and persistence they conquered all the place (and the place was exceeding far from them), and the kings that came against them from the uttermost part of the earth, until they had discomfited them, and smitten them very sore; and how the rest gave them tribute year by year; how Antiochus also, the great king of Asia, who came against them to battle, having a hundred and twenty elephants, with horse, and chariots, and an exceeding great host, was discomfited by them, and they took him alive, and appointed that both he and such as reigned after him should give them a great tribute, and should give hostages, and the country of India, and Media, and Lydia, and of the goodliest of their countries; and they took them from him, and gave them to king Eumenes; and how they of Greece

took counsel to come and destroy them; but the thing was known to them, and they sent against them a captain, and fought against them, and many of them fell down wounded to death, and they made captive their wives and their children, and took booty of them, and conquered their land, and pulled down their strongholds, and brought them into bondage to this day; and how the rest of the kingdoms and of the isles, as many as rose up against them at any time, they destroyed, and made them to be their servants, but with their friends and such as relied upon them they kept peace; and how they conquered the kingdoms that were near and those that were far off, and all that heard of their fame were afraid of them; and how whomsoever they will to succor and to make kings these do they make kings; and whomsoever they will, do they depose; and how they are exalted exceedingly; yet for all this none of them did ever put on a crown, neither did he clothe himself with purple, to be magnified thereby; and how they had made for themselves a senate house, and day by day three hundred and twenty men sat in council, consulting alway for the people, to the end they might be well ordered; and how they commit their government to one man year by year, that he should rule over them, and be lord over all their country, and all are obedient to that one, and there is neither envy nor emulation among them.[88]

And Judas chose Eupolemus the son of John, and Jason, and sent them to Rome, to make a league of peace and confederacy with them, and that they should take the yoke from them; for they saw that the kingdom of the Syrians did keep Israel in bondage. And they went to Rome (and the way was exceedingly long), and they entered into the senate house, and said, "Judas, who is also called Maccabeus, and his brethren, and the people of the Jews, have sent us to you, to make a confederacy and peace with you, that we might be registered your confederates and friends."

Now the thing was well pleasing in their sight. And this is the copy of the writing which they wrote back again on tables of brass, and sent to Jerusalem, that it might be with them there for a memorial of peace and confederacy:

"Good success be to the Romans, and to the nation of the Jews, by sea and by land forever: the sword also and the enemy be far from them. But if war arise for Rome first, or any of their confederates in all their dominion, the nation of the Jews shall help them as confederates, as the occasion shall prescribe to them, with all their heart: and to them that make war upon them they shall not give, neither supply, food, arms, money, or ships, as it hath seemed good to Rome, and they shall keep their ordinances without taking anything therefor. In the same manner moreover if war come first upon the nation of the Jews, the Romans shall help them as confederates with all their soul, as the occasion shall prescribe to them: and to them that are confederates with their foes there shall not be given food, arms, money, or ships, as it hath seemed good to Rome; and they shall keep these ordinances, and that without deceit. According to these words have the Romans made a covenant thus with the people of the Jews. But if hereafter the one party and the other shall take counsel to add or diminish anything, they shall do it at their pleasure, and whatsoever they shall add or take away shall be established."

Judas Dies upon the Field of Battle

Demetrius[89] heard that Nicanor was fallen with his forces in battle, and he sent Bacchides and Alcimus into the land of Judah, and the right wing of his army with them. And they went by the way that leadeth to Gilgal, and encamped against Mesaloth, which is in Arbela, and got possession of it, and destroyed much people. And they encamped against Jerusalem; and they removed, and went to Berea, with twenty thousand footmen, and two thousand horse.

And Judas was encamped at Elasa, and three thousand chosen men were with him; and they saw the multitude of the forces that they were many, and they feared exceedingly. And many slipped away out of the army; there were not left of them more than eight hundred men.[90]

And Judas saw that his army was slipping away, and that the battle pressed upon him, and he was sore troubled. But he said to them that were left, "Let us rise and go up against our adversaries, if perhaps we may be able to fight with them."

And they would have dissuaded him, saying, "We shall in no wise be able, but let us rather save our lives now. We are but few."

But Judas said, "Let it not be so that I should do this thing. If our time is come, let us die manfully for our brethren's sake, and not stain our honor." And the host removed from the camp and stood to encounter them.

Now Judas saw that Bacchides and the strength of his army were on the right side, and he took with him all that were brave in heart, and the right wing was discomfited by them, and he pursued after them to the mount Azotus.

They that were of the left wing saw that the right wing was discomfited, and they turned and followed upon the footsteps of Judas and of those that were with him; and the battle was sore, and many on both sides fell wounded to death.

And Judas fell, and the rest fled.

And Jonathan and Simon took Judas their brother, and buried him in the sepulcher of his fathers at Modin.

When Judas died, all Israel made great lamentation for him, and mourned many days, and said,

"How is the mighty fallen, the savior of Israel!"

And the rest of the acts of Judas, and his wars, and the valiant deeds which he did, and his exceeding greatness, they are not written, for they were exceeding many.

THE EXPLOITS OF JONATHAN

He Nobly Succeeds His Brother

Thereupon all the friends of Judas assembled and said to Jonathan: "Since thy brother Judas has died, we have no one like him to go out against our enemies and Bacchides and against those of our own kin who hate us; now therefore we have chosen thee this day to be our prince and leader in his place that thou mayest fight our battles."

So Jonathan assumed the leadership at that time and took the place of his brother Judas.

Jonathan Fights Against Odds, and Swims to Safety

When Bacchides heard that the Jews had chosen another leader, he came on the sabbath day to the banks of Jordan with a great host. And Jonathan said to his company, "Let us stand up now and fight for our lives, for it is not with us today as yesterday and the day before. For, behold, the battle is before us and behind us; moreover the water of the Jordan is on this side and on that side, and marsh and wood; and there is no place to turn aside. Now therefore cry to heaven, that ye may be delivered out of the hand of your enemies."

And the battle was joined, and Jonathan stretched forth his hand to smite Bacchides, and he escaped from him. And Jonathan and they that were with him leaped into the Jordan, and swam over to the other side: and the Syrians did not pass over Jordan against them. And there fell of Bacchides' company that day about a thousand men.

Jonathan Takes the City of Joppa

Alexander slew Demetrius and succeeded him as king, but a son of Demetrius, also named Demetrius, attempted to recover his father's kingdom and sent an army into Palestine. Jonathan remained on the side of King Alexander and conquered Apollonius, general of Demetrius.

BOATS ON THE RIVER JORDAN

The word Jordan means "down-comer." Because of its swiftness the Jordan has never been used for navigation. There are only four fording places between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea, and only two bridges, one of these a railroad bridge. In times of flood little rowboats are the only practical means of crossing. Into its waters plunged Jonathan and his followers to escape from Bacchides, thus making another historical crossing of this famous stream. The Jordan has seen the Israelites crossing to Canaan, Jacob escaping a brother's wrath, Gideon, Jephthah, and Abner crossing with their troops, Elijah and Elisha before the hour of parting, and David with his faithful band fleeing from Absalom.

Now in the hundred and sixty-fifth year came Demetrius son of Demetrius out of Crete into the land of his fathers: and king Alexander heard thereof, and he was grieved exceedingly, and returned to Antioch. And Demetrius appointed Apollonius, who was over Coele-syria, and he gathered together a great host, and encamped in Jamnia, and sent to Jonathan the high priest, saying:

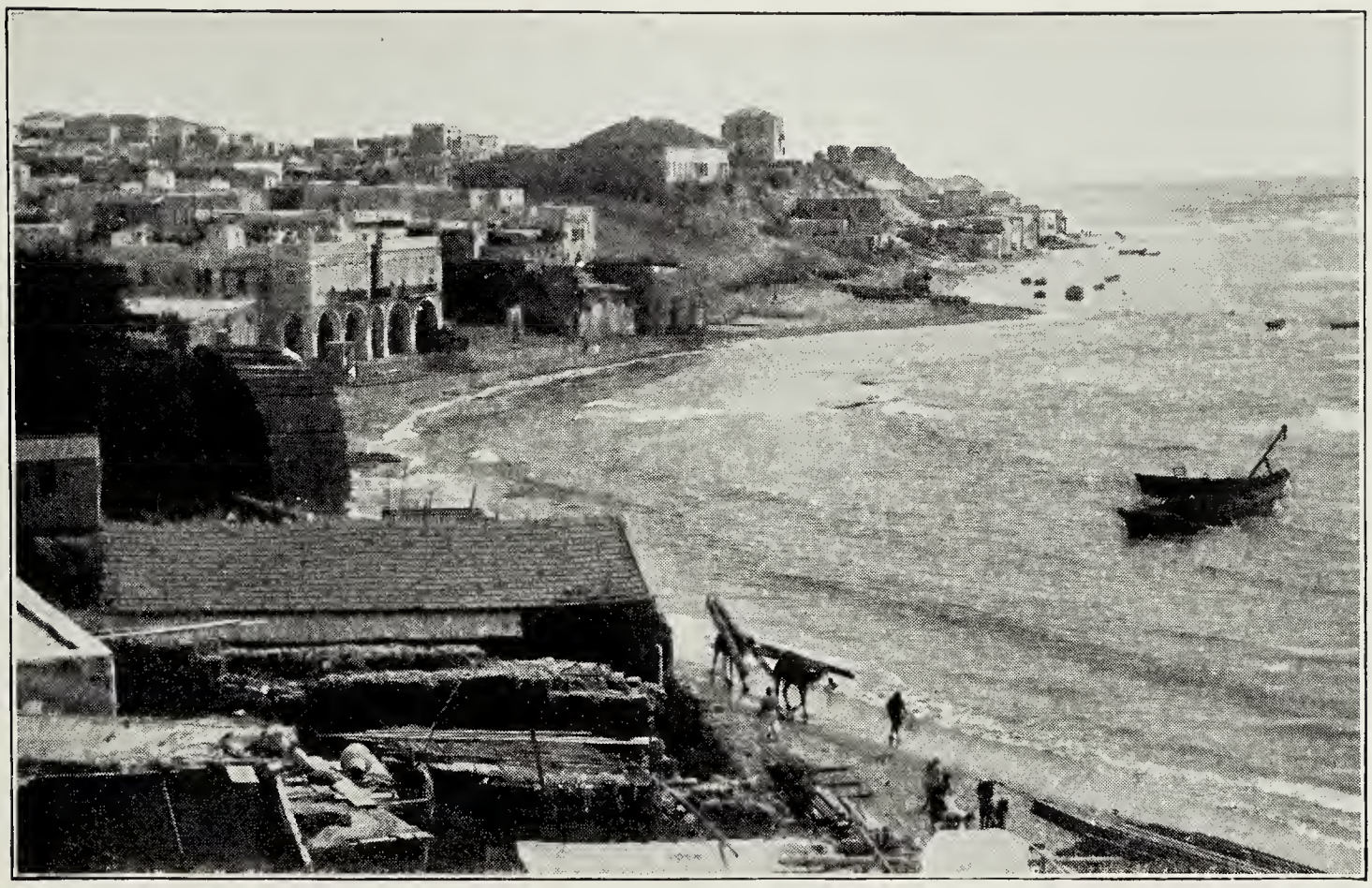
"Thou alone liftest up thyself against us, but I am had in derision and in reproach because of thee. And why dost thou vaunt thy power against us in the mountains? Now therefore, if thou trustest in thy forces, come down to us into the plain, and there let us try the matter together; for with me is the power of the cities. Ask and learn who I am, and the rest that help us; and they say, 'Your foot cannot stand before our face; for thy fathers have been twice put to flight in their own land.' And now thou shalt not be able to abide the horse and such a host as this in the plain, where is neither stone nor flint, nor place to flee to."

Now when Jonathan heard the words of Apollonius, he was moved in his mind, and he chose out ten thousand men, and went forth from Jerusalem, and Simon his brother met him to help him. And he encamped against Joppa: and they shut him out, because Apollonius had a garrison in Joppa: and they fought against it. And they of the city were afraid, and opened to him: and Jonathan became master of Joppa.

Jonathan Routs Apollonius and His Cavalry

Now Apollonius heard, and he gathered an army of three thousand horse, and a great host, and went to Azotus as though he were on a journey, and from thence drew onward into the plain, because he had a multitude of horse, and trusted therein. And Jonathan pursued after him to Azotus, and the armies joined battle.

And Apollonius had left a thousand horse behind them in ambush. But Jonathan learned that there was an ambush



JOPPA (Jaffa)

Joppa is the only seaport on the whole Palestinian coast from Carmel to Egypt. And even in the best of weathers, it is a dangerous one. The town is now the terminus of the Jerusalem and Joppa Railway. Before the Israelitish invasion, letters were written from Joppa which are now in the British Museum. It was then subject to the throne of Egypt.

"Oldest of cities! Sidon of the north,
And Kiriath-arba of the rocky south,
And Egypt's Zoan, cannot equal thee!
Andromeda and Perseus, if the lay
Of classic fable tell the truth, were here.
Monarchs of Palestine and kings of Tyre,
And the brave Maccabee, have all been here;
And Cestius with his Roman plunderers;
And Saladin and Baldwin, and the host
Of fierce Crusaders from the British North."

behind him. And they surrounded his army, and cast their darts at the people, from morning until evening: but the people stood still, as Jonathan commanded them: and their horses were wearied. And Simon advanced his host, and engaged footmen (for the horsemen were tired), and they were discomfited by him, and fled. The horsemen also were scattered in the plain, and they fled to Azotus, and entered into Beth-dagon, their idol's temple, to save themselves.

And Jonathan burned Azotus, and the cities round about it, and took their booty; and the temple of Dagon, and them that fled into it, he burned with fire. They that had fallen by the sword, with them that were burned, were about eight thousand men.

And from thence Jonathan marched, and encamped against Ascalon, and they of the city came forth to meet him with great pomp. And Jonathan, with his troops, returned to Jerusalem, having much booty.

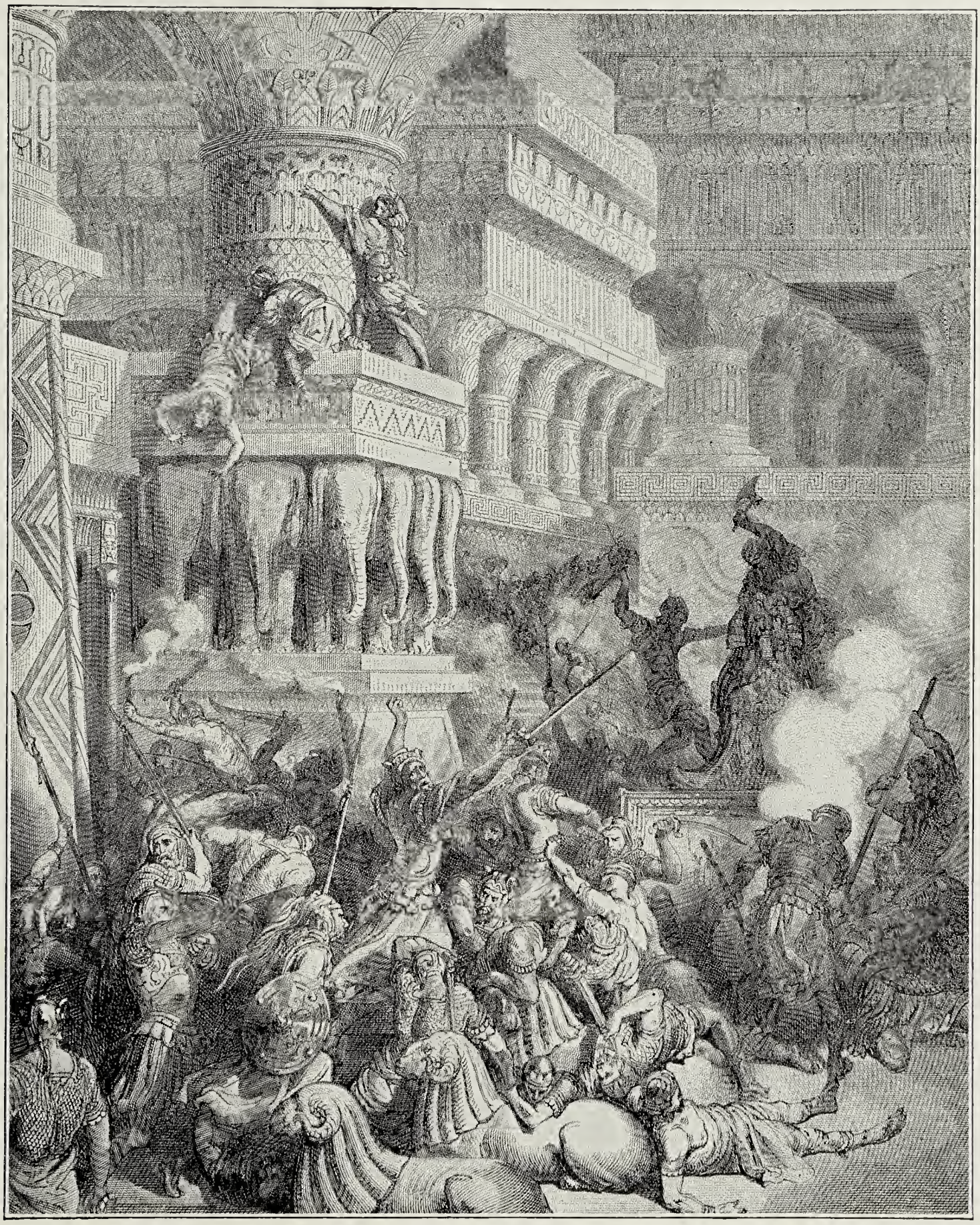
And it came to pass, when king Alexander heard these things, he honored Jonathan; and he sent to him a buckle of gold, as the custom is to give such as are of the kindred of the kings: and he gave him Ekron and all the borders thereof for a possession.

Now Tryphon sought to reign over Asia, and to put upon himself the crown. But he was afraid lest Jonathan should not permit him. So he sought a way to take him, that he might destroy him.

And he came to Beth-shan. And Jonathan came forth to meet him with forty thousand men, chosen for battle. And Tryphon saw that he came with a great host, and he was afraid to stretch forth his hand against him. So he received him honorably, and commended him to all his friends, and gave him gifts. And he said to Jonathan, "Why hast thou put all this people to trouble, seeing there is no war between us? and now send them away to their homes, but choose for thyself a few men who shall be with thee, and come thou to Ptolemais, and I will give it up to thee."

Then he put trust in him, and did even as he had said, and sent away his forces.

Now as soon as Jonathan entered Ptolemais, the people of Ptolemais shut the gates and laid hands on him, and they slew with the sword all who came in with him. And Tryphon sent forces and horsemen into Galilee, and into the great plain, to destroy all of Jonathan's men.



JONATHAN DESTROYING THE TEMPLE OF DAGON
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

But they perceived that he had been taken and had perished, and those who were with him, and they encouraged one another and marched in closed ranks, prepared to fight.

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PANORAMA OF HAIFA AND THE BAY OF ACRE

From this path, which leads up to the promontory of Mount Carmel, one can look back over one of the most prosperous cities in Palestine. Houses of stone or of whitewashed plaster, roofs of tile, pleasant groves, and, in the "down-town section," warehouses and terminals. Haifa is destined to be the great port of Palestine. Across the bay, a little to the left of the picture, is Acre of crusading fame, though boasting a much more ancient history. It has been fought for and defended by Simon Maccabeus and Jonathan, by Richard Cœur de Leon, by Saladin and by Napoleon. At the time of Christ, Acre was called Ptolemais and was the chief port of entry for the Decapolis. Saint Paul touched here once on his way to Jerusalem.

And when those who were pursuing them saw that they were ready to fight for their lives, they turned back again.

Thus they all came safely into the land of Judah, and they mourned for Jonathan and those who were with him, and they were greatly afraid. And all Israel mourned bitterly.

Then all the heathen who were round about them sought to destroy them utterly, for they said, "They have no ruler nor any to help them. Now therefore let us fight against them and wipe out the memory of them from among men."

THE LEADERSHIP OF SIMON

His Many Services Bring Joy to Israel

Now when Simon heard that Tryphon had collected a vast army to come into the land of Judah to destroy it utterly, and saw that the people trembled and were greatly afraid, he went up to Jerusalem and gathered the people together, and encouraged them.

And the courage of the people rose as they heard these words. And they answered with a loud voice, saying, "Thou art our leader instead of Judas and Jonathan, thy brothers! Fight our battles, and we will do all that thou dost command."

So he gathered together all the warriors, and made haste to finish the walls of Jerusalem, and fortified the entire length of it. Then Simon built the strongholds of Judea, and fenced them about with high towers and great walls and gates and bars, and laid up stores in the strongholds.

But those who were in the citadel at Jerusalem were prevented from going out and from going into the country, and from buying and selling, so that they suffered exceedingly from hunger, and a great number of them perished through famine. Then they cried out to Simon to make peace with them. He did so, but put them out from there, and cleansed the citadel from its pollutions.

And he entered it on the twenty-third day of the second month in the one hundred and seventy-first year,[91] with praise and palm branches, with harps, with cymbals, with viols, with hymns, and with songs, because a great enemy was destroyed out of Israel. And he ordained that they should observe that day each year with gladness.

And the temple mount, which was beside the citadel, he made stronger than before.

So the land had rest all the days of Simon.

He sought the good of his nation;
And his authority and glory were well-pleasing to them

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VIEW IN THE OLD CITY OF ACRE

Ancient temples and fortifications furnish the stones from which these modern buildings are built. Few relics of antiquity, therefore, are visible in this historic old town. The building with the dome and minaret is a Mohammedan mosque. The sky line beyond is Mount Carmel, ten miles away across the Bay.

And amid all his glory he took Joppa for a haven,
And made it an entrance for the isles of the sea;
And he enlarged the borders of his nation,
And got possession of the outskirts.

And they tilled their land in peace,
And the land gave her increase,
And the trees of the plains their fruit.

The ancient men sat in the streets,
They communed all of them together of the common good,
And the young men put on glorious but not warlike apparel.
He provided victuals for the cities,
And furnished them with all manner of munition,
Until the name of his glory was known to the end of the earth.

He made peace in the land,
And Israel rejoiced with great joy;
They sat each man under his own vine and fig tree,
And there was none to make them afraid;
There ceased in the land any that fought against them;
And the kings were discomfited in those days.
And he strengthened all the buttresses of his people.
He was full of zeal for the law,
And every lawless and wicked person he banished.
He made the sanctuary glorious,
And multiplied the vessels of the temple.

Simon Commissions His Sons to Serve the Nation

And Simon called his two eldest sons, Judas and John, and said to them: "I and my brethren and my father's house have fought the battles of Israel from our youth, even to this day; and things have prospered in our hands, that we should deliver Israel oftentimes. But now I am old, and ye moreover, by his mercy, are of a sufficient age: be ye instead of me and my brother, and go forth and fight for our nation; but let the help which is from heaven be with you."

Then he chose out of the country twenty thousand men of war and horsemen, and they went against Cendebeus, and slept at Modin.

And rising up in the morning, they went into the plain, and, behold, a great host came to meet them, of footmen and horsemen: and there was a brook betwixt them. And he encamped over against them, he and his people: and he saw that the people were afraid to pass over the brook. So he passed over first, and the men saw him, and passed over after him.

And he divided the people, and set the horsemen in the midst of the footmen: but the enemies' horsemen were exceeding many. And they sounded with the trumpets; and Cendebeus and his army were put to rout, and there fell of them many wounded to death, but they that were left fled to the stronghold.

At that time was Judas, John's brother, wounded: but John pursued after them, till he came to Kidron, which Cendebeus had built; and they fled to the towers that are in the fields of Azotus; and he burned it with fire; and there fell of them about two thousand men. And he returned to Judea in peace.

Simon and His Sons Are Slain Through a Plot

Ptolemy the son of Abubus had been appointed captain for the plain of Jericho, and he had much silver and gold; for he was the high priest's son-in-law. And his heart was lifted up, and he was minded to make himself master of the country. So he took counsel deceitfully against Simon and his sons, to make away with them.

Now Simon was visiting the cities that were in the country, and taking care for the good ordering of them; and he went down to Jericho, himself and Mattathias and Judas his sons, in the hundred and seventy-seventh year, in the eleventh month, the same is the month Sebat: and the son of Abubus received them deceitfully into the little stronghold that is called Dok, which he had built, and made them a great banquet, and hid men there.

And when Simon and his sons had drunk freely, Ptolemy and his men rose up, and took their arms, and came in upon Simon into the banqueting place, and slew him, and his two sons, and certain of his servants. And he committed a great iniquity, and recompensed evil for good.[92]

AN ATTEMPT TO ROB THE TEMPLE

Heliodorus Acts upon a Lie

Now when the holy city was inhabited with all peace, and the laws were still kept in the best manner, because of the godliness of Onias the high priest, and his hatred of wickedness, it came to pass that even the kings themselves honored the place, and glorified the temple with the best gifts; so that also Seleucus the king of Asia out of his own revenues bore all the costs belonging to the service of the sacrifices. But one Simon of the tribe of Benjamin, being appointed chief of the temple, fell out with the high priest about the office of market master in the city.

And he told Apollonius son of the general, then in Phœnice, that the treasury in Jerusalem was full of unspeakable sums of money, to the extent that the abundance of its wealth could not be counted, and that it held no relation to the outlay for sacrifices, but that it was possible that this should fall into the king's power. And Apollonius, on meeting the king, gave information concerning the money which had been brought to light; and he chose out Heliodorus his prime minister, and having given him orders sent him to look after the removal of the aforesaid money.

So Heliodorus took his journey to fulfil the king's purpose, and having come to Jerusalem, and been kindly received by the high priest of the city, he told him concerning the intelligence that had been given, and made it clear wherefore he was present, and asked if these things were so indeed. And the high priest told him that they were

THE EXPULSION OF HELIODORUS FROM THE TEMPLE
From a painting by Raphael

deposits belonging to widows and orphans; and that some of it belonged also to Hyrcanus the son of Tobias, a man of very high position, and that it was not as the wicked Simon had falsely stated, but the sum in all was four hundred talents of silver, and two hundred of gold; and that it was altogether impossible that they should be unjustly treated that had trusted to the holiness of the place and to the majesty and inviolability of the temple, honored over all the world.

A Terrifying Vision Overcomes the Intruder

But Heliodorus started to execute that which had been determined on. And as he was already there present himself with his guard about the treasury, the Lord of spirits, and the ruler of all power, caused a great manifestation, so that all that presumed to come in with him were terror-stricken at the power of God, and became faint and without courage. For there appeared to them a horse having a terrible rider, and adorned with most beautiful trappings, and it ran fiercely, and smote at Heliodorus with its fore-feet; and he that sat upon it appeared in full armor of gold. Moreover two other young men appeared before him, notable in strength, very beautiful in their splendor, and gloriously appareled; and they stood by him on either side, and scourged him unceasingly, and gave him many stripes. And he fell suddenly to the ground, and was compassed with great darkness; and they caught him up, and put him on a litter. Him, that just now came with a great train and with all his guard into the aforesaid treasury, they carried as one unable to help himself, manifestly recognizing the power of God.

But straightway certain of Heliodorus' friends prayed Onias, that he would call upon the Most High to grant him his life, who lay just ready to give up the ghost. And the high priest, fearing lest the king should have the opinion that some villainy had been practiced on Heliodorus by the

Jews, offered a sacrifice for the restoration of the man. And as the high priest was making an atonement, the same young men in the same clothing appeared, and standing beside Heliodorus, said, "Give Onias the high priest great thanks, insomuch as for his sake the Lord hath granted thee life."

But Heliodorus returned with his force to the king, and he bore witness before all to the works of the great God, which he had seen with his eyes.

THE MACCABEES

Down-trodden 'neath the Syrian heel
Did Zion's scepter lie;
Her shrine, where once God's glory flung
Its radiance, now wildly rung
With pagan revelry.

And in the Temple's secret place,
Where once the High Priest bowed
In homage to the King of kings,
The vilest of all earthly things
Was worshiped by the crowd.

And still the flaming altar smoked,
The priest was at his post,
Commanding Israel's sons to pray
To images of stone and clay,
Or swell the holocaust.

Seven glorious brethren there had stood,
Unflinching, side by side,
And, sooner than yield up their faith,
Had dared the fagot's burning breath,
And willing martyrs died.

Not unavenged and not in vain
Fell that undaunted race;
For Judas, with his patriot band,
Drove the oppressors from the land,
And cleansed the holy place.

—*From "Chanukah," by Marion Hartog*

SCENES FROM HEBREW LIFE

SCENES FROM HEBREW LIFE

PART of the Bible's service to us is rendered through its faithful portrayal, not only of the events of Hebrew history and the exploits of heroes and heroines, kings and prophets and men of God, but also of the ideas and customs of Bible times. Many of these ideas we have seen illustrated in such stories as those of Balaam, Ruth, and Esther. In Judith and the story of the Maccabees, we note the intense devotion to the law which filled the hearts of the faithful Jews in the centuries just preceding the Christian era.

Some of these contemporary religious ideas seem to us now strange, and unlike the lofty religion of Jehovah taught by the great prophets, to say nothing of the gospel of love and service as taught in the New Testament. But this very fact helps us to see how much the Hebrews learned during the long centuries of their providential training. We cannot expect the settlers on the hills of Canaan in the days of the judges to show the high conception of Jehovah as Lord of all the earth that Israel learned through her experiences with the nations. The Bible faithfully portrays the Israelites, sometimes by its descriptions and narrations, and sometimes by letting the writers show us, as they write, the peculiarities of their religious thinking. Some of the stories that follow were very interesting to the Jews, as is shown by the fact that they have been preserved in the Greek additions to the Bible known as the Apocrypha. They are also of interest to us, both in themselves and as contributing to our understanding of the religious ideas that prevailed in the days when they were written.

THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND OF FIRE

"*The cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night.*"

They trod in peace the Arab sand,
In martial pomp and show,
With banners spread and sword in hand,
None dared to be a foe.
Though wandering o'er the world's wide face,
None dared molest the sacred race.

For o'er the ark still hovered nigh
The mystic guide and shield;
A cloud when day o'erspread the sky,
A flame when night concealed.
This pointed out their devious way,
Or told their armies where to stay.

—*Henry Rogers*

ADVENTURES OF THE ARK

The sacred Ark of Jehovah symbolized to the Hebrews the favoring presence of their own covenant God. According to the Bible narrative, it was originally a simple wooden chest, containing the stone tablets on which God had written "the ten words" of his covenant with Israel. We also learn that it was overlaid with gold, and that in it were put other sacred relics of the wilderness journeys and the displays of God's power. As the repository of the commandments, it was a constant reminder of the terms on which Jehovah would bless and save his people.

THE ARK MADE

Moses Is Commanded to Make the Ark

AT that time the Lord said to me: "Hew thee two tables of stone like to the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and make thee an ark of wood. And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables which thou brokest, and thou shalt put them in the ark."

And I made an ark of acacia wood, and hewed two tables of stone like the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in my hand. And he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which the Lord spoke to you in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, in the day of the assembly: and the Lord gave them to me.

And I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they are, as the Lord commanded me.

In the Bible account of the wilderness wanderings, we find the Ark, borne always by the priests, carried in advance of the host to locate their camp, going with them into battle, and by its presence assuring them of victory. When the host crossed the Jordan, the priests bore the Ark into the bed of the river; and the people, since the Lord was there to protect them, did not hesitate to follow. Before Jericho, we find the Ark carried by the priests at the head of the daily procession around the city walls.

After the defeat before Ai, Joshua prostrates himself before the Ark of the Lord; and after his capture of the city he carries it to Shechem, where it forms the center of a solemn assembly. Once only in the days of the judges, during the civil war with the tribe of Benjamin, is mention made of the Ark. At that time it is at Bethel.

THE ARK TAKEN

The remarkable story of the Ark's adventures in Samuel's day begins with the familiar account of the boy Samuel ministering before the Ark of the Lord at the temple in Shiloh. It was then in charge of Eli, the priest of Jehovah, and his two sons. When Israel went to battle with the Philistines, who held the land in subjection, they were defeated; and the people demanded that the Ark be brought to the camp, that the Lord might thus as of old lead them to victory. So the priests Hophni and Phinehas brought the Ark from Shiloh to the scene of battle before Aphek; and the army raised a great shout when it arrived.

The Ark Is Taken by the Philistines

And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, "What meaneth the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews?" And they understood that the ark of the Lord was come into the camp.

And the Philistines were afraid; for they said, "God is come into the camp." And they said: "Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods? these are the gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness. Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye be not servants to the Hebrews, as they have been to you: quit yourselves like men, and fight."

And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten; and they fled every man to his tent: and there was a great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.

And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head. And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by

the wayside watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city, and told it, all the city cried out. And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, "What meaneth the noise of this tumult?"

And the man hastened, and came and told Eli. Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see. And the man said to Eli, "I am he that came out of the army, and I fled today out of the army."

Then he said, "How went the matter, my son?"

And the messenger answered, and said, "Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken."

And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that Eli fell from off his seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck broke, and he died; for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.

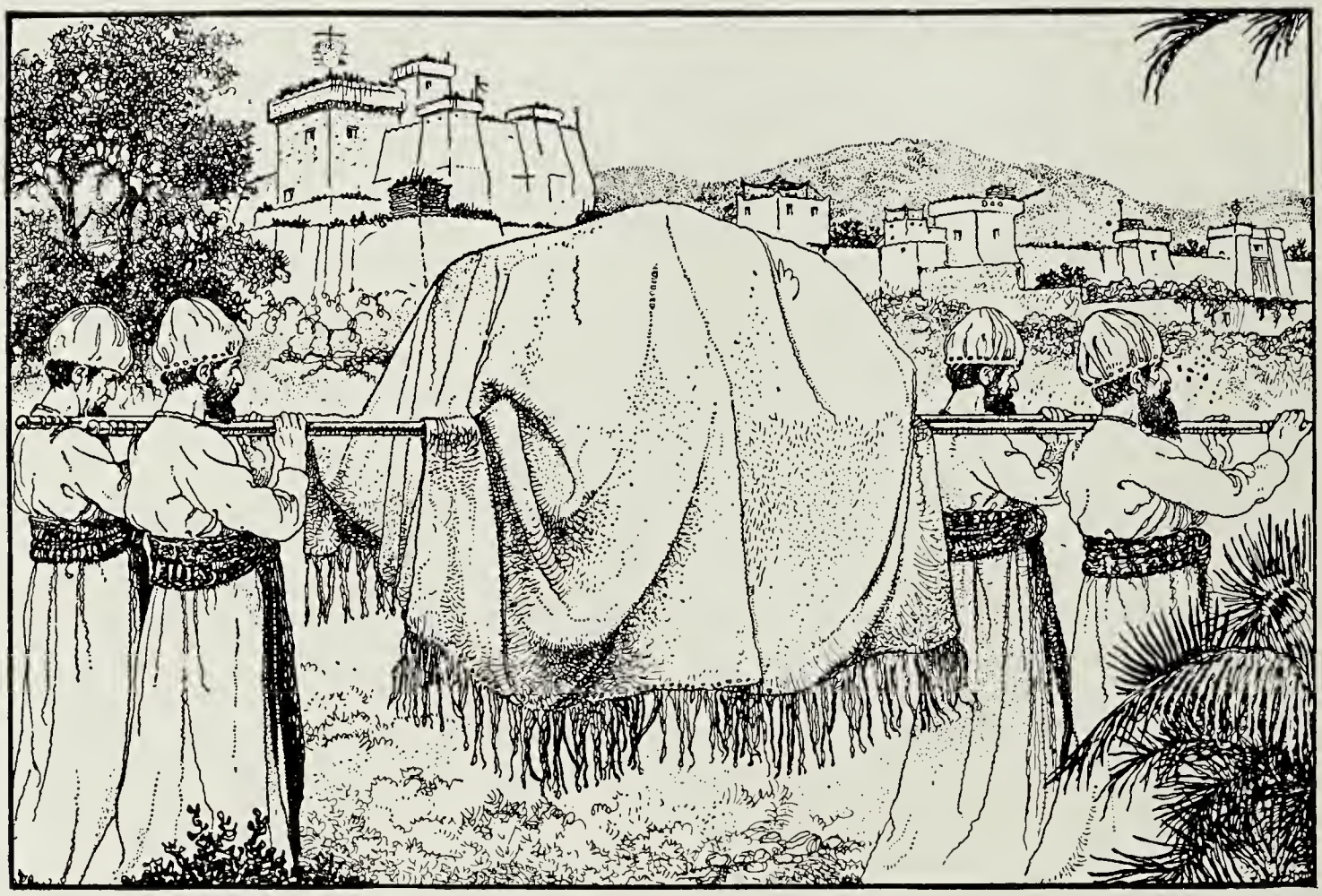
THE ARK RESTORED

The Ark Brings Trouble on the Philistines

Now the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Eben-ezer unto Ashdod. And they brought it into the house of Dagon [the Philistines' god], and set it by Dagon.

And when they of Ashdod rose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again.

And when they rose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him. Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day.



PRIESTS BEARING THE ARK
From a drawing by Isings

And the hand of the Lord was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote them with plague boils, even Ashdod and the coasts thereof.[93] And when the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, "The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us; for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god."

They sent therefore and gathered all the lords of the Philistines to them, and said, "What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel?"

And they answered, "Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto Gath." And they carried the ark of the God of Israel about thither.

And it was so, that, after they had carried it about, the hand of the Lord was against the city with a very great destruction: and he smote the men of the city, both small and great, and plague boils broke out upon them.

PRIESTS GOING BEFORE THE ARK
From a drawing by Isings

Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron. And it came to pass, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, "They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people." So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, "Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to its own place, that it slay us not, and our people." For there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there. And the men that died not were smitten with the plague boils: and the cry of the city went up to heaven. And the ark of the Lord was in the country of the Philistines seven months.

The Philistines Send back the Ark

And the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners, saying, "What shall we do to the ark of the Lord? tell us wherewith we shall send it to its place."

And they said, "If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, send it not empty; but in any wise return him a trespass offering: then ye shall be healed, and it shall be known to you why his hand is not removed from you."

Then said they, "What shall be the trespass offering which we shall return to him?" They answered, "Five golden plague boils, and five golden mice, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines; for one plague was on you all, and on your lords. Wherefore ye shall make images of your plague boils, and images of your mice, that mar the land; and ye shall give glory to the God of Israel: peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, and from off your gods, and from off your land.[94] Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? When he had wrought wonderfully among them, did they not let the people go, and they departed?

"Now therefore make a new cart, and take two milch kine, on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them: and take the ark of the Lord, and lay it upon the cart; and put the jewels of gold, which ye return him for a trespass offering, in a coffer by the side thereof; and send it away, that it may go. And see, if it goeth up by the way of its own border to Beth-shemesh, then he hath done us this great evil: but if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that smote us; it was a chance that happened to us."

And the men did so; and took two milch kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home: and they laid the ark of the Lord upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold and the images of their plague boils.

And the kine took the straight way to the way of Beth-shemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left; and the lords of the Philistines went after them unto the border of Beth-shemesh.

RETURN OF THE ARK TO BETHSHEMESH
From a drawing by Gustave Doré

And they of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley: and they lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it.

And the cart came into the field of Joshua, a Beth-shemite, and stood there, where there was a great stone: and they clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt offering to the Lord.

And when the five lords of the Philistines had seen it, they returned to Ekron the same day.

The Ark Comes to Kiriath-jearim

And he smote of the men of Beth-shemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the Lord.

And the men of Beth-shemesh said, "Who is able to stand before the Lord, this holy God? and to whom shall he go up from us?"

And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-jearim, saying, "The Philistines have brought again the ark of the Lord; come ye down, and fetch it up to you."

And the men of Kiriath-jearim came, and fetched up the ark of the Lord, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord.

And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kiriath-jearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.

In the account of Saul's campaign against the Philistines, when Jonathan put them to flight, we learn that he had the Ark at his headquarters at Gibeah, a few miles east of Kiriath-jearim.

The story of how David brought up the Ark from the house of Abinadab and set it in its tabernacle in his new citadel at Jerusalem is given in Volume Two.

The last recorded adventure of the Ark was when, in David's flight from Absalom, it was carried by Zadok the priest over the Brook Kidron to insure the king's safe escape from Jerusalem. By his order it did not follow him, but was returned to its tabernacle.

When Solomon had finished building his temple, the Ark was solemnly brought up from "the city of David" and placed in "the most holy place," there to be seen only by the high priest once a year. What became of it after that we do not know. It is not mentioned as part of the furniture of Zerubbabel's temple or of that built by Herod in Jesus' day. But the memory of its ancient glory and of what it meant to Israel grew in the hearts of the faithful from age to age.

THE LORD'S PRIDE IN HIS HOLY PLACE

For the Ark in the Time of David

Lord, remember David and all his afflictions:
How he swore unto the Lord,
And vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob:

"Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house,
Nor go up into my bed;
I will not give sleep to mine eyes,
Or slumber to mine eyelids;
Until I find out a place for the Lord,
A habitation for the mighty God of Jacob."

Lo, we heard of it in Ephrathah:
We found it in the fields of the wood:
We will go into his tabernacles:
We will worship at his footstool.

"Arise, O Lord, into thy resting place;
Thou, and the ark of thy strength.
Let thy priests be clothed with righteousness;
And let thy saints shout for joy."

For the Temple of Solomon

For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed.
The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David;
He will not turn from it:

"Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.
If thy children will keep my covenant
And my testimony that I shall teach them,
Their children also shall sit upon thy throne forevermore."

For the Lord hath chosen Zion;
He hath desired it for his habitation.
"This is my resting place forever:
Here will I dwell; for I have desired it.

"I will abundantly bless her provision:
I will satisfy her poor with bread.
I will also clothe her priests with salvation:
And her saints shall shout aloud for joy.

"There will I make the horn of David to bud:
I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.
His enemies will I clothe with shame:
But upon himself shall his crown flourish."

THE PROPHET AND THE LION

To the loyal followers of Jehovah in the kingdom of Judah, and to their successors in the days of exile, the rich and corrupt shrine at Bethel, established as a national sanctuary by the first Jeroboam, was an object of special abhorrence. In the strange story which follows, taken from the two Books of Kings, this feeling finds strong expression.

THE WORD AGAINST BETHEL

Jeroboam Sets up Idolatry at Bethel

NOW Jeroboam said in his heart: "If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then will the heart of this people turn again to their lord, even to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah."

Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even to Dan.

And he made houses of high places, and made priests from among the people, who were not of the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast that is in Judah, and he offered upon the altar. So did he in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made: and he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he made. So he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel the fifteenth day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had devised in his own heart; and ordained a feast to the children of Israel: and he offered upon the altar, and burnt incense.

A Seer of Judah Predicts Josiah's Reform

And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the Lord unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense.

And he prophesied against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, "O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord, 'Behold, a child shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee.'"

And he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign which the Lord hath spoken: behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out."

And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, who had prophesied against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, "Lay hold on him." And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given.

And the king answered, and said to the man of God, "Entreat now the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again." And the man of God besought the Lord, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before.

And the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward."

And the man of God said to the king: "If thou wilt give me half thy house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place; for so was it charged me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor return again by the same way that thou camest.'"

So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel.

THE FATE OF THE SEER

The Old Prophet Deceives the Seer

Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel: the words which he had spoken to the king, them they told also to their father.

And their father said to them, "What way went he?" Now his sons had seen what way the man of God went, that came from Judah. And he said unto his sons, "Saddle me the ass." So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon, and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak.

And he said to him, "Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah?" And he said, "I am."

Then he said to him, "Come home with me, and eat bread."

And he said, "I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place: for it was said to me by the word of the Lord, 'Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest.'"

And he said to him, "I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'Bring him back with thee into thy house, that he may eat bread and drink water.'" But he lied to him.

So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water.

The Lion Fulfils the Prophet's Word

And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the Lord came to the prophet that brought him back: and he prophesied to the man of God that came from Judah, saying, "Thus saith the Lord, 'Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee, but

camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the Lord did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy body shall not come unto the sepulcher of thy fathers.'"

And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back.

And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his body was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it; the lion also stood by the body. And, behold, men passed by, and saw the body cast in the way, and the lion standing by the body: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt.

And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he said, "It is the man of God, who was disobedient to the word of the Lord: therefore the Lord hath delivered him to the lion, which hath torn him, and slain him, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake to him."

And he spake to his sons, saying, "Saddle me the ass." And they saddled him.

Then he went and found his body cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing by the body: the lion had not eaten the body, nor torn the ass. And the prophet took up the body of the man of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and the old prophet came to the city, to mourn and to bury him. And he laid his body in his own grave; and they mourned over him, saying, "Alas, my brother!"

And it came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spoke to his sons, saying, "When I am dead, then bury me in the sepulcher wherein the man of God is buried; lay my bones beside his bones; for the saying which he prophesied by the word of the Lord against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria, shall surely come to pass."

THE WORD FULFILLED

Three centuries after King Jeroboam I set up the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, King Josiah of Judah instituted his vigorous and thorough-going reformation of worship in Judah and in the principal "high places" of Samaria, beginning with Bethel.

King Josiah Uproots Idolatry in Judah and Israel

And Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, "Hilkiah the priest hath delivered me a book." And Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.

And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. And he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord.

And the king stood by a pillar, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people stood to the covenant.

And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of the Lord all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the Asherah, and for all the host of heaven.

Then he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Bethel.

And he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven. And the high places that were before Jerusalem did the king

defile. And he broke in pieces the images, and cut down the groves, and filled their places with the bones of men.

Moreover the altar that was at Bethel, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he broke down, and burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the Asherah.

The King Spares the Seer's Tomb

And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchers that were there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchers, and burned them upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words.

Then he said, "What title is that that I see?"

And the men of the city told him, "It is the sepulcher of the man of God, that came from Judah and proclaimed these things, that thou hast done against the altar of Bethel."

And he said, "Let him alone; let no man move his bones." So they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria.

And all the houses also of the high places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Bethel. And he slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem.

TOBIT

The Book of Tobit is an ancient Jewish short story. Its pious author lived and wrote about a hundred and fifty years before Christ. We find the book in the Apocrypha. From the many translations which have come down to us, it is evident that the story was a favorite bit of literature among the Jews of the Dispersion, in and before the New Testament days.

The author has laid the scene of his story in Assyria and Media, in the days of Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon, the great kings of Nineveh who destroyed Samaria and carried captive so many of the people of the northern tribes of Israel. That was six centuries before his day. The social, commercial, and political background, however, is that of his own time.

Besides its interest as a story, the book has many other elements of value. The genuine Jewish piety of Tobit, the needless motherly anxiety of his good wife Anna, the many included maxims of wisdom and prayers of devotion, and the general lesson that God guides and cares for his faithful followers, make the book edifying to readers in any age. Those features which to us seem strange—evil spirits, magic, and the earthly presence of an angel operating under an assumed name—are of great historic value; for they show us some of the religious ideas firmly held by orthodox Jews in the author's day. The Sadducees' disbelief in angels and spirits is easier to understand when we contrast it with such superstitions as are here revealed.

GODLINESS IN TROUBLE

Tobit the Exile Keeps the Law of God

THE book of the words of Tobit the son of Tobiel, who in the days of Enemessar [Shalmaneser] king of the Assyrians was carried away captive out of Thisbe, which is south of Kedesh of Naphtali in Galilee, above Asher.

I Tobit walked in the ways of truth and righteousness all the days of my life, and I did many almsdeeds to my brethren and my nation, who went with me into the land of the Assyrians, to Nineveh.

And when I was in mine own country, in the land of Israel, while I was yet young, all the tribe of Naphtali my ancestor fell away from the house of Jerusalem. All the tribes which fell away together sacrificed to the heifer Baal, and so did the house of Naphtali my ancestor. And I alone went often to Jerusalem at the feasts, having the firstfruits and the tenths of mine increase, and that which was first shorn; and I gave them at the altar to the priests the sons of Aaron.

And when I became a man, I took to wife Anna [Hannah], of the stock of our own family; and of her I had a son Tobias.

And when I was carried away captive to Nineveh, all my brethren and kindred did eat of the bread of the Gentiles: but I kept myself from eating, because I remembered God with all my soul. And the Most High gave me grace and favor in the sight of Enemessar, and I was his purveyor.

And I went into Media, and left in trust with Gabael the brother of Gabrias, at Rages of Media, ten talents of silver.

His Goodness Brings Him to Poverty and Blindness

And when Enemessar was dead, Sennacherib his son reigned in his stead; and in his time the highways were troubled, and I could no more go into Media.

And in the days of Enemessar I did many almsdeeds to my brethren: I gave my bread to the hungry, and my garments to the naked: and if I saw any of my race dead, and cast forth behind the wall of Nineveh, I buried him. And if Sennacherib the king slew any when they came fleeing from Judea, I buried them secretly; for in his wrath he slew many: and the bodies were sought for by the king, and were not found.

But one of the Ninevites went and told the king that I buried them and hid myself; and when I knew that I was sought for to be put to death, I withdrew myself for fear. And all my goods were confiscated; and there was nothing left to me, save my wife Anna and my son Tobias.

And there passed not five and fifty days before two of the king's sons slew him; and they fled into the mountains of Ararat. And Sarchedonus [Esar-haddon] his son reigned in his stead; and he appointed over all the accounts of his kingdom, and over all his affairs, Achiacharus my brother Anael's son.

And Achiacharus made request for me, and I returned to Nineveh.

Now when I was come home again, and my wife Anna was restored to me, and my son Tobias, in the feast of Pentecost, which is the holy feast of the seven weeks, there was a good dinner prepared for me, and I sat down to eat. And I said to my son, "Go and bring what poor man soever thou shalt find of our brethren, who is mindful of the Lord; and, lo, I tarry for thee."

And he came and said, "Father, one of our race is strangled, and is cast out in the market place."

And before I had tasted aught, I sprang up, and took the body up into a chamber until the sun was set. And I returned and washed myself, and ate my bread in heaviness, and remembered the prophecy of Amos, as he said:

"Your feasts shall be turned into mourning,
And all your mirth into lamentation."

And I wept: and when the sun was set, I went and made a grave, and buried him.

And my neighbors mocked me, and said, "He is no longer afraid to be put to death for this matter: and yet he fled away; and, lo, he burieth the dead again."

And the same night I returned from burying him; and being [ceremonially] unclean, I slept by the wall of my courtyard, and my face was uncovered, and mine eyes were open. And impurities fell into mine eyes, and white films came in them.

And I went to the physicians, and they helped me not; but Achiacharus took care of me, until he went into Elymais.

His Neighbors Recognize His Kindness

And my wife Anna did spin in the women's chambers, and did send the work back to the owners. And they on their part paid her wages, and gave her also besides a kid. But when it came to my house, it began to cry.

And I said to my wife, "From whence is this kid? is it stolen? Return it to the owners; for it is not lawful to eat anything that is stolen." But she said, "It hath been given to me for a gift, over and above the wages."

And I did not believe her; and I bade her return it to the owners; and I was mortified for her.

But she answered and said to me, "Where are thine alms and thy righteous deeds? behold, thou and all thy works are known."

(Notwithstanding this pleasing evidence of his neighbors' appreciation of the family, Tobit in his poverty and blindness felt profoundly discouraged.)

And I was grieved and wept, and prayed in sorrow, saying:

O Lord, thou art righteous,
And all thy works and ways are mercy and truth,
And thou judgest true and righteous judgment forever.
Remember me and look on me;
Take not vengeance on me for my sins and mine ignorances,
And the sins of my fathers.
Deal with me as is pleasing in thy sight:
Command my spirit to be taken from me,
That I may be released and become earth;
For it is profitable for me to die rather than to live,
Because I have heard false reproaches.
Command that I be now released from my distress,
And go to the everlasting place:
Turn not thy face away from me.

Sarah's Seven Husbands Are Slain by the Demon Asmodeus

That same day, to Sarah the daughter of Raguel in Ecbatana of Media, it came that she also was reproached by her father's maidservants; because she had been given in marriage to seven husbands, and Asmodeus the evil spirit slew them on their wedding day.

And the maidservants said to her: "Dost thou not know that thou stranglest thy husbands? Thou hast had already seven husbands, and thou hast had no profit of any one of them. Why dost thou torment us? if they be dead, go thy ways with them: let us never see of thee either son or daughter."

(So unkind a wish as this was too much for the poor widow.)

When Sarah heard these things, she was grieved exceedingly, so that she thought to have hanged herself. But she said, "I am my father's only daughter; if I do this, it will disgrace him, and I shall bring down his old age with sorrow to the grave."

And she prayed by the window, and said:

"Blessed art thou, O Lord my God,
And blessed is thy holy and honorable name forever.
Lord, I have set mine eyes and my face toward thee:
Command that I be released from the earth,
And that I no more hear reproach.
Thou knowest, Lord, that I am pure from sin,
And that I never polluted my name, nor the name
of my father,
In the land of my captivity.
Seven husbands of mine are dead already:
Why should I live?
And if it pleaseth thee not to slay me,
Command some regard to be had of me, and pity,
And that I hear no more reproach."

ANGEL GUIDANCE

The Angel Raphael Comes to Bring Help

And the prayer of both was heard before the glory of the Great One: and Raphael [one of the seven great angels of God] was sent to heal them both; to scale away the white films from Tobit's eyes, and to give Sarah the daughter of Raguel to Tobias the son of Tobit for a wife, and to bind Asmodeus the evil spirit; because it was the family right of Tobias to inherit her. At the very same time did Tobit return and enter his house, and Sarah the daughter of Raguel come down from her upper chamber.

In that day Tobit recalled the money which he had left in trust with Gabael in Rages of Media; and he said to himself, "I have asked for death: why do I not call my son Tobias, that I may tell him about this money before I die?" And he called him.

(To the young man, Tobit now gave a long and earnest admonition to virtue, holiness, and wisdom, closing with these words:)

"And now, my child, remember my commandments, and let them not be blotted out of thy mind. And now I show thee as to the ten talents of silver, which I left in trust with Gabael the son of Gabrias at Rages of Media. Fear not, my child, because we are poor. If thou fear God, and depart from all sin, and do that which is pleasing in his sight, thou hast much wealth."

And Tobias replied, "Father, I will do all thy commands. But how can I secure the money, seeing I do not know him?"

Tobit Sends His Son to Receive the Deposit

Then his father gave him the receipt for the money, and said to him, "Seek thee a man to go with thee; and I will give him wages while I yet live: and go and receive the money." And Tobias went to seek a man.

And he found Raphael, who was an angel, though Tobias knew it not. And he said, "Can I go with thee to Rages of Media? and dost thou know the places well?"

And the angel said to him, "I will go with thee, and I know the way well; and I have lodged with our brother Gabael."

And Tobias said to him, "Wait for me, and I will tell my father." And he replied, "Go, and tarry not."

And he went in, and reported to his father, "Behold, I have found one who will go with me." But Tobit said, "Call him to me, that I may know of what tribe he is, and whether he be a trusty man to go with thee."

And he called him, and he came in; and they saluted each other.

And Tobit said to him, "Brother, of what tribe and of what family art thou?"

And he replied, "Seekest thou a tribe and a family, or a man employed to go with thy son?"

But Tobit insisted, "I would know, brother, thy kindred and thy name." And he answered, "I am Azarias, the son of Ananias the great, of thy brethren."

And he said to him: "Welcome, brother; and be not angry with me because I sought to know thy tribe and family. Thou art my brother, of an honest and good lineage; for I knew Ananias and Jathan, the sons of Shemaiah, when we went together to Jerusalem. My brother, thou art of a great stock. But tell me, what wages shall I give thee? A drachma a day, and thy expenses, as allowed for my son? And moreover, if ye return safe and sound, I will add something to thy wages." And so they agreed.

And he said to Tobias, "Prepare thyself for the journey, and may God prosper you."

And his son prepared what was needful for the journey; and his father said to him, "Go thou with this man; but God shall prosper your journey, and may his angel go with you."

Then they both went forth to depart; and they took the young man's dog with them.

But Anna his mother wept. And she said to Tobit: "Why hast thou sent away our child? Is he not the staff of our hand, in going in and out before us? Do not be greedy to add money to money, but let it be as refuse in comparison with our child. For as the Lord hath given us to live, so is it sufficient for us."

And Tobit said to her: "Do not worry, my sister: he shall return safe and sound, and thine eyes shall see him. For a good angel shall go with him, and his journey shall be prospered, and he shall return safe and sound." And she made an end of weeping.

A Fish Provides the Means of Rescue

Now as they went on their journey, they came at eventide to the river Tigris, and they lodged there.

But the young man went down to wash himself; and a fish leaped out of the river, and would have swallowed up the young man. But the angel said to him, "Take hold on the fish." And the young man caught hold of the fish, and cast it up on the land. And the angel said to him, "Cut the fish open, and take the heart and the liver and the gall, and put them up safely." And the young man did as the angel commanded him; but they roasted the fish and ate it.

And the two of them went on their way, till they drew near to Ecbatana.

And the young man said to the angel, "Brother Azarias, of what use is the heart and the liver and the gall of the fish?"

And he said to him: "As to the heart and the liver, if a demon or an evil spirit trouble any one, we must make a smoke thereof before the man or the woman, and the person shall be no more vexed. But as for the gall, it is good to anoint a man that hath white films in his eyes, and he shall be healed."

The Travelers Visit Sarah's Home

Now when they drew nigh to Rages, the angel said to the young man: "Brother, today we shall lodge with Raguel, and he is thy kinsman; and he hath an only daughter, named Sarah. I will speak for her, that she should be given thee for a wife. For to thee doth the inheritance of her appertain, and thou only art of her kindred. And the maid is fair and wise.

"And now hear me, and I will speak to her father; and when we return from Rages, we will celebrate the marriage. For I know that Raguel may in no wise marry her to another, according to the law of Moses, or else he shall be liable to death; because it appertaineth to thee to take the inheritance, rather than any other."

Then the young man said to the angel: "Brother Azarias, I have heard that this maid hath been given to seven men, and that they all perished in the bridechamber. And now I am the only son of my father; and I am afraid, lest I go in and die, even as those before me: for a demon loveth her, who hurteth no man but those who are married to her. And now I fear lest I die, and bring my father's and mother's life to the grave with sorrow because of me: and they have no other son to bury them."

But the angel said to him: "Dost thou not remember the words which thy father commanded thee, that thou shouldst take a wife of thine own kindred? And now hear me, brother; for she shall be thy wife; and make no reckoning of the demon, for this night shall she be given thee for thy wife. Thou shalt take the ashes of incense, and shalt lay upon them some of the heart and liver of the fish, and shalt make a smoke therewith: and the demon shall smell it, and flee away, and never come again any more. Fear not, for she was prepared for thee; and thou shalt save her, and she shall go with thee."

And when Tobias heard these things, he loved her, and his soul clave to her exceedingly.

And they came to Ecbatana, and arrived at the house of Raguel. And Sarah met them; and she saluted them, and they her: and she brought them into the house.

And Raguel said to Edna his wife, "How like is the young man to Tobit my cousin!"

And Raguel asked them, "From whence are ye, brethren?"

And they replied, "We are of the sons of Naphtali who are captives in Nineveh."

Then he said to them, "Know ye Tobit our brother?"

And they said, "We know him."

And he said, "Is he in good health?"

And they answered, "He is both alive and in good health." And Tobias added, "He is my father."

Then Raguel sprang up and kissed him, and wept, and blessed him, and said to him, "Thou art the son of an honest and good man."

And when he heard that Tobit had lost his sight, he was grieved, and wept; and Edna his wife and Sarah his daughter wept. And they received them gladly; and they killed a ram of the flock, and set ample food before them.

Tobias Defies Asmodeus and Weds Sarah

But Tobias said to Raphael, "Brother Azarias, speak of those things of which thou didst talk in the way, and let the matter be settled."

And Raphael communicated the thing to Raguel.

And Raguel said to Tobias, "Eat and drink, and make merry; for it belongeth to thee to take my child. Howbeit I will show thee the truth. I have given my child to seven men; and whensoever they married her, they died. But for the present be merry."

But Tobias said, "I will taste nothing here, until ye make covenant and enter into covenant with me."

Then Raguel said, "Take her to thyself from henceforth, according to the manner [provided in the law]: thou art her

brother, and she is thine: and the merciful God give you all good success!"

And he called his daughter Sarah, and took her by the hand, and gave her to be wife to Tobias; and he said, "Behold, take her to thyself after the law of Moses, and lead her away to thy father." And he blessed them; and he called Edna his wife, and took a book, and wrote an instrument, and sealed it.

Then they began to eat.

And Raguel called his wife Edna, and said to her, "Sister, prepare the other chamber, and bring her in thither." And she did as he bade her, and brought her in thither: and she wept, and received the tears of her daughter. And she said to her, "Be of good comfort, my child; the Lord of heaven and earth give thee joy for this thy sorrow: be of good comfort, my daughter!"

And when they had finished their supper, they brought Tobias in to her.

And Raguel went and digged a grave, saying, "Lest he also should die."

He Keeps the Wedding Feast with Joy

Now as Tobias went in, he remembered the words of Raphael; and he took the ashes of the incense, and put the heart and the liver of the fish thereupon, and made a smoke therewith. And when the demon smelled the smell, he fled into the uttermost parts of Egypt, and the angel bound him. Then Tobias and his wife prayed unto the Lord; and she said with him, "Amen."

And Raguel returned to his house; and he said to Edna his wife, "Send one of the maidservants, and let them see whether he be alive; so that, if he be not alive, we may bury him, and no man know it."

So the maidservant opened the door, and went in, and found them both sleeping, and came forth, and told them that he was alive.

And Raguel blessed God, saying:

"Blessed art thou, O God,
With all pure and holy blessing.
Blessed art thou, because thou hast had mercy on two,
That were the only children of their parents:
Show them mercy, O Lord;
Accomplish their life in health,
With gladness and mercy."

And he commanded his servants to fill the grave. And he kept the wedding feast for them fourteen days.

BLESSINGS AT LAST

The Travelers Turn Their Faces Homeward

Now before the days of the wedding feast were finished, Raguel swore to Tobias, that he should not depart till the fourteen days of the wedding feast were fulfilled; and that then he should take the half of his goods, and go in safety to his father. "And the rest," said he, "when I and my wife shall die."

And Tobias called Raphael, and said to him: "Brother Azarias, take with thee a servant, and two camels, and go to Rages of Media to Gabael, and receive the money for me, and bring him to the wedding feast: because Raguel hath sworn that I shall not depart; and my father counteth the days; and if I tarry long, he will be sorely grieved."

So Raphael went on his way; and he lodged with Gabael, and gave him the receipt for the money. Then he brought forth the bags with their seals, and gave them to him. And they rose up early in the morning, and came to the wedding feast: and Tobias blessed [congratulated] his wife.

The Mother's Sorrow Is Turned into Joy

Now Tobit his father made his count every day: and when the days of the journey were expired, and they came not, he

said, "Is he perchance detained? or is Gabael dead, and there is no man to give him the money?" And he was sorely grieved.

But his wife said to him, "The child hath perished: see how long he tarrieth!" And she began to bewail him, saying, "Woe is me, my child; I care for nothing, since I have let thee go, the light of mine eyes!"

And Tobit kept saying to her, "Hold thy peace, do not fret; he is in good health."

And she said to him, "Hold thou thy peace, deceive me not: my child hath perished!"

And she went out every day into the road by which they went, and did eat no bread in the daytime, and ceased not for whole nights to bewail her son Tobias, until the fourteen days of the wedding feast were expired, which Raguel had sworn that he should spend there.

But Tobias said to Raguel, "Send me away, for my father and my mother look no more to see me."

But his father-in-law said to him, "Abide with me, and I will send to thy father, and they shall declare to him how things go with thee."

And Tobias saith, "No; send me away to my father."

Then Raguel rose, and gave him Sarah his wife, and half his goods and servants and cattle and money; and he blessed them, and sent them away, saying, "The God of heaven shall prosper you, my children, before I die."

And he said to his daughter, "Honor thy father-in-law and thy mother-in-law; they are now thy parents; let me hear a good report of thee." And he kissed her. And Edna said to Tobias, "The Lord of heaven restore thee, dear brother, and grant to me that I may see thy children of my daughter Sarah, that I may rejoice before the Lord; and, behold, I commit my daughter unto thee in special trust: vex her not."

After these things Tobias also went his way, blessing God because he had prospered his journey; and he blessed Raguel and Edna his wife.

And he went on his way, till they drew near unto Nineveh. And Raphael said to Tobias, "Knowest thou not, brother, how thou didst leave thy father? Let us run forward before thy wife, and prepare the house. But take in thy hand the gall of the fish." And they went their way, and the dog went after them.

And Anna sat looking down the road for her son. And she espied him coming, and called to his father, "Behold, thy son cometh, and the man that went with him!"

And Raphael said, "I know, Tobias, that thy father will open his eyes. Do thou therefore anoint his eyes with the gall; and being pricked therewith, he shall rub, and shall make the white films to fall away, and he shall see thee."

And Anna ran to him, and fell upon the neck of her son, and said to him, "I have seen thee, my child; and henceforth I will die." And they wept both.

And Tobit went forth toward the door, and stumbled: but his son ran to him, and took hold of his father: and he spread the gall on his father's eyes, saying, "Be of good cheer, my father." But when his eyes began to smart, he rubbed them; and the white films scaled away from the corners of his eyes; and he saw his son, and fell upon his neck.

And he wept, and said,

"Blessed art thou, O God,
And blessed is thy name forever,
And blessed are all thy holy angels;
For thou didst scourge, and didst have mercy on me:
Behold, I see my son Tobias!"

And his son went in rejoicing, and told his father the great things that had happened to him in Media.

And when Tobit came near to Sarah his daughter-in-law, he blessed her, saying, "Welcome, daughter: blessed is God who hath brought thee unto us, and blessed are thy father and thy mother." And there was joy to all his brethren that were in Nineveh.

And Achiacharus, and Nasbas his brother's son, came: and Tobias' wedding feast was kept seven days with great gladness.

Raphael Explains His Heavenly Mission

Then Tobit called his son Tobias, and said to him, "See, my child, that the man that went with thee have his wages; and thou must give him more."

And he replied, "Father, it is no unfairness to me if I give him the half of those things which I have brought: for he hath brought me back to thee in safety, and he cured my wife, and brought my money, and likewise cured thee."

And the old man said, "It is due him." So he called the angel, and said to him, "Take the half of all that ye have brought."

Then Raphael called them both aside, and said to them:

"Bless God, and give him thanks,
And magnify him in the sight of all that live,
For the things that he hath done with you.
It is good to keep the secret of a king,
But to reveal gloriously the works of God.
Do good,
And evil shall not find you.
A little with righteousness
Is better than much with unrighteousness.
They that do alms and righteousness shall be filled with life;
But they that sin are enemies to their own life.

"Surely I will keep close nothing from you:
When thou didst pray, and Sarah thy daughter-in-law,
I did bring the memorial of your prayer before the Holy One:
And when thou didst bury the dead,
I was with thee likewise.

And when thou didst not delay to rise up and leave thy
dinner,
That thou mightest go and cover the dead,
Thy good deed was not hid from me,
But I was with thee.
And now God did send me to heal thee,
And Sarah thy daughter-in-law.

"I am Raphael,
One of the seven holy angels,
Who present the prayers of the saints,
And go in before the glory of the Holy One."

And they were both troubled, and fell on their faces; for they were afraid. But he said to them, "Be not afraid; ye shall have peace: but bless God forever. For not of any favor of mine, but by the will of your God I came; wherefore bless him forever. All these days did I appear to you; and I did neither eat or drink, but ye saw a vision. Now give God thanks: because I ascend to him that sent me; and write in a book all the things that have been done."

And they confessed the great and wonderful works of God, and how the angel of the Lord had appeared to them.

In the concluding chapter, we learn that Tobit lived to a great old age, that he gave his parting blessing to Tobias and his six sons, and that Tobias, removing to Ecbatana on his father's advice, lived to see the destruction of Nineveh as predicted by the prophet Jonah.

BEL AND THE DRAGON

The Septuagint, or Greek Old Testament, inserts at the end of the Book of Daniel this characteristic Jewish fling at the absurdities of idol-worship and the corrupt practices of the heathen priests. Here and elsewhere, also, the writer, with evident pride, exults in the wisdom of Daniel as judge and seer.

BEL OVERTHROWN

AND king Astyages was gathered to his fathers, and Cyrus the Persian received the kingdom. And Daniel lived with the king, and was honored above all his friends.

Now the Babylonians had an idol called Bel; and there were spent upon him every day twelve great measures of fine flour, and forty sheep, and six firkins of wine. And the king did honor to it, and went daily to worship it: but Daniel worshiped his own God.

And the king said to him, "Why dost thou not worship Bel?"

And he said, "Because I may not do honor to idols made with hands, but to the living God, who hath created the heaven and the earth, and hath sovereignty over all flesh."

Then said the king to him, "Thinkest thou not that Bel is a living god? or seest thou not how much he eateth and drinketh every day?"

Then Daniel laughed. And he said, "O king, be not deceived; for this is but clay within and brass without, and did never eat or drink anything."

So the king was wroth: and he called for his priests, and said to them, "If ye tell me not who this is that devoureth these provisions, ye shall die. But if ye can show me that Bel devoureth them, then Daniel shall die; for he hath spoken blasphemy against Bel." And Daniel said to the king, "Let it be according to thy word."

Now there were seventy priests of Bel, besides their wives and children. And the king went with Daniel into the temple of Bel. And the priests of Bel said: "Lo, we will get us out: but thou, O king, set on the meat, and mingle the wine, and set it forth; and then shut the door fast, and seal it with thine own signet; and when thou comest in the morning, if thou find not that Bel hath eaten up all, we will suffer death: or else Daniel, that speaketh falsely against us."

Now they were not greatly concerned; for under the table they had made a concealed entrance, whereby they entered in continually and consumed those things.

So when they were gone forth, the king set the meat before Bel. Now Daniel had commanded his servants to bring ashes; and they strewed all the temple with the ashes, in the presence of the king alone. Then went they out, and shut the door, and sealed it with the king's signet, and so departed.

And during the night the priests came, with their wives and children, as they were wont to do, and did eat and drink up all.

In the morning the king arose betimes, and Daniel with him. And the king said, "Daniel, are the seals whole?" And he replied, "Yea, O king, they are whole."

And as soon as he had opened the door, the king looked upon the table; and he cried with a loud voice, "Great art thou, O Bel, and with thee is no deceit at all!"

Then Daniel laughed; and he held the king, that he should not go in. And he said, "Behold now the pavement, and mark well whose footsteps are these." And the king said, "I see the footsteps of men, women and children."

Then the king was angry; and he took the priests with their wives and children; and they showed him the concealed doors where they came in and consumed such things as were upon the table.

Therefore the king slew them, and delivered Bel into Daniel's power; and Daniel overthrew Bel and his temple.

THE DRAGON SLAIN

And in that same place there was a great dragon, which they of Babylon worshiped. And the king said to Daniel, "Wilt thou also say that this is of brass? lo, he liveth, and eateth and drinketh: thou canst not say that he is no living god; therefore worship him."

Then said Daniel, "I will worship the Lord my God; for he is a living God. But give me leave, O king, and I will slay this dragon without sword or staff." And the king said, "I give thee leave."

Then Daniel took pitch, and fat, and hair, and boiled them together, and made lumps of them: this he put in the dragon's mouth; so the dragon did eat thereof, and burst asunder. And Daniel said, "Lo, these are the gods ye worship!"

But when the Babylonians heard of that, they were moved with great indignation. And they conspired against the king, saying, "The king is become a Jew; and he hath pulled down Bel, and slain the dragon, and put the priests to the sword." So they came to the king, and said, "Deliver us Daniel, or else we will destroy thee and thy house."

DANIEL DELIVERED

Now when the king saw that they pressed him sore, being determined, the king delivered Daniel to them.

And they cast Daniel into the lions' den; and he was there six days. And in the den there were seven lions; and every day they had given to them two carcasses, and two sheep. But at this time these were not given to them, so that they might devour Daniel.

Now there was in Judea the prophet Habakkuk. And he had made pottage, and had broken bread into a bowl, and was going into the field, to bring it to the reapers.

But the angel of the Lord said to Habakkuk, "Go, carry the dinner that thou hast into Babylon, to Daniel, in the lions'

den." And Habakkuk answered, "Lord, I never saw Babylon; neither do I know where the den is."

Then the angel of the Lord took him up by the crown, and lifted him up by the hair of his head, and with the blast of his breath set him in Babylon, over the den.

And Habakkuk cried, saying, "O Daniel, Daniel, take the dinner which God hath sent thee!"

And Daniel said, "Thou hast remembered me, O God: neither hast thou forsaken them that love thee." So Daniel arose, and did eat: and the angel of God set Habakkuk in his own place again immediately.

Now upon the seventh day the king came to bewail Daniel: and when he came to the den, he looked in, and, behold, Daniel was sitting. Then cried the king with a loud voice, saying, "Great art thou, O Lord, thou God of Daniel; and there is none other beside thee!"

And he drew him out, and cast those that were the cause of his destruction into the den; and they were devoured in a moment before his face.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

HEROES AND HEROINES

THE SHIELD WITH CROSSED SWORDS is the symbol appropriate to HEROES AND HEROINES. The sword has always been the symbol of aggressive adventure, of warfare, of conquest. The shield is the symbol of protection, of ability to withstand every attack, of safety from the assaults of the enemy, of loyalty. The two stand for dauntless courage. The shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit are essential to every servant of God, Saint Paul believed; and they have been borne by every hero and heroine of the race, who by means of them have subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Before the shield of the mighty, swords may clash forever. It is only when the shield is vilely cast away that the enemy can sing, "How are the mighty fallen and the weapons of war perished!"

THE BEGINNINGS

1. Eden, meaning in Babylonian "a plain," appears to refer to the broad alluvial region of lower Babylonia. The land is extremely fertile when supplied with irrigation. The "garden," or irrigated area, of our narrative seems to have been situated in the eastern part of this region and to have been watered by a canal connected in some way with the four rivers named. Of these rivers the Hiddekel, or Tigris, and the Euphrates are well known; the identity of the other two is uncertain.

2. The Tree of Life. In connection with these Bible statements, it is interesting to note an attempt by the ancient Babylonians to express their longing for some means of averting death. In the epic of Gilgamesh, a poem composed in the days of Abraham, we read how the hero after long searching found "the plant of life," which, however, was snatched away by a serpent before he could eat it.

3. The Moral. The insertion here of this impressive moral lesson indicates that the purpose of the sacred writer is first of all to teach certain great social and religious truths that the Hebrews needed to learn; in this case, the sanctity of the marriage relation.

4. The Law of Blood Revenge. The story of Cain suggests that widespread law of primitive peoples by which, when a life is taken, the next of kin, sometimes the whole tribe, takes up the solemn duty of avenging the blood of the slain. Cain's mark appears to mean the mark of a tribe, the members of which will avenge him if any one takes his life. We have slowly outgrown this conception and now believe the execution of justice should be left to the state. When we have learned to forgive our enemies, we shall have advanced further still.

5. The Babylonian Account of the Deluge. The Deluge formed an era in Babylonian chronology, and there were several Babylonian accounts of it. One of these, embodied in the eleventh book of the Epic of Gilgamesh, was discovered in 1872 by George Smith. Xisuthros, the Chaldean Noah, is described in it as a native of the city of Shurippak on the Euphrates. On account of his piety he was warned by the god Ea of the approaching catastrophe and ordered to build a ship in which "the seed of life" should be preserved. Its height, as well as the length and breadth of its deck, was one hundred and twenty cubits. It was divided into six stories, with seven compartments, each containing nine rooms. It was provided with a rudder, and pitched within and without. After filling it with provisions and wine, Xisuthros is made to say:

"With all I had I filled it;
With all the silver I possessed I filled it;
With all the gold I possessed I filled it;

With all that I possessed of the seed of life of all kinds I filled it.
I brought into the ship all my slaves and handmaids,
The cattle of the field, the beasts of the field, the craftsmen,
All of them I brought into it.
The Sun-god appointed the time, and said:
'In the night will I cause the heavens to rain destruction;
Enter the ship, and close thy door.' . . .

"When I had closed the ship, to Buzur-sadi-rabi the sailor
I intrusted the vessel with all its goods.
The waters of the morning at dawn arose from the horizon, a black cloud;
The Storm-god thundered in the midst of it;
Nebo and Merodach marched in front;
The throne bearers marched over mountain and plain;
The mighty god of death let loose the whirlwind. . . .

"The violence of the Storm-god reached to heaven;
All that was light was turned to darkness. . . .

"Brother beheld not his brother, men knew not one another.
In the heaven the gods feared the deluge,
And hastened to ascend to the heaven of Anu.
The gods cowered like a dog that crouches in a kennel;
The great goddess lifted up her voice:
'The former generation is turned to clay. . . .
Like the spawn of the fish it fills the deep.' . . .

"Six days and nights rages the wind; flood and storm devastate the earth.
When the seventh day came, the flood ceased,
The storm subsided, and the tempest of the deluge was at an end
I beheld the deep and uttered a cry,
For the whole of mankind was turned to clay;
Like the trunks of trees did the bodies float.
I opened the window, and the light fell upon my face;
I stooped and sat down weeping;
Over my face ran my tears.
I beheld a shore beyond the sea.
Towards the twelfth point rose the land.
On the mountain of Nizir the ship grounded.

"For seven days the ship rested on the peak of Nizir; then,
When the seventh day came, I sent forth a dove and let it go.

The dove went and returned;
A resting place it found not, but turned back.
I sent forth a swallow and let it go; the swallow went and returned;
A resting place it found not and it turned back.
I sent forth a raven and let it go;
The raven went and beheld the going down of the waters,
And it approached, it waded, it croaked and did not turn back.
Then I sent forth [everything] to the four winds; I offered sacrifices;
Built an altar on the summit of the mountain;
Set libation vases seven by seven;
Beneath them I piled up reeds, cedar-wood and herbs.
The gods smelt the savor, the gods smelt the sweet savor,
The gods gathered like flies over the sacrifices.
But when the great goddess was come from afar
He lifted up the great [rain]bow which Anu had made for her."

According to this Babylonian account, Bel, who had sent the deluge to punish the sins of mankind, was enraged at finding that any one had escaped from it. But Ea, the god of the deep, pacified him.

So Bel entered the ship, and placing Xisuthros and his wife on either side of him, he blessed and transported them without dying to the Babylonian paradise.

6. Babel is the Hebrew form of the name of the city of Babylon.

DEEDS OF DARING AND DEVOTION

7. Balaam. This striking story of Balaam forms an episode in the narrative of Israel's journey from Egypt through the wilderness to Canaan. Its purpose is evidently to teach that nothing can prevent the progress and success of Israel, since Jehovah is their leader.

Balaam appears to have been an Eastern seer, with a reputation for predicting future events when specially inspired by Jehovah's spirit. He lived at Pethor, at or near the Euphrates. In a later account of the wilderness journeys we learn that he encouraged the Israelites to take part in the corrupt idolatry of the Midianites, and was slain with them in an attack ordered by Moses.

8. Moabite Kings. Besides this Balak and Zippor his father, we know the names of a number of the kings of Moab. The king of whom we know most is Mesha, who reigned in the days of Omri, Ahab and Jehoram, kings of Israel. He has left a long inscription, telling how King Omri had conquered his land, and how by the power of Chemosh his god he was enabled to recover it.

9. Balak's Offering. In ancient sacrifices only a portion of the animal was burned on the altar. Another portion was usually taken by

the priest as his fee. The remaining parts, generally the best, were used for food. As there was no way of chilling the meat to keep it fresh, it had to be eaten at once. A sacrifice, therefore, was always an occasion of feasting and hospitality, portions being sometimes, as here, sent to those whom the worshiper wished to favor.

10. Agag, the king of the Amalekites, whom King Saul was commanded to overthrow and slay, but whom instead he took prisoner and brought to Samuel. After a stern rebuke to Saul for his disobedience, the prophet himself slew the captive king. The tragic story deeply impressed the Hebrew people, as this reference to Agag's greatness shows.

11. The Nazirite (Nazarite) Vow. By an early Hebrew custom embodied in the Jewish law, a man or woman might be "separated," as the word implies, for a definite period or for life. The Nazirite must keep himself from wine and strong drink and from contact with a dead body. To let the hair grow was the mark that the vow was being kept; to cut it, that the vow had been broken or ended. Paul took a Nazirite vow during his ministry at Corinth and closed it on his departure. Later, at Jerusalem, he joined four Nazirites who were completing their terms, and assumed the cost of the sacrifices they had to offer before they were entitled to shave their heads and be free from their vow. Samson's vow, made for him by his parents, was lifelong.

12. The Camp of Dan. Westward from Jerusalem, midway between the city and the sea, lay the territory assigned at the Conquest to the tribe of Dan. Through it ran the Valley of Sorek, which the railroad now uses in its climb from Jaffa (Joppa) on the coast to Jerusalem on the central ridge. Timnath lies south of the valley, Zorah and Eshtaol being on its northern slope. In this borderland between Judah and the aggressive Philistines there could be little peace, as these Samson stories show; and in the story of Micah, which follows, we shall learn how part of the Danites migrated to Laish, later called Dan, in the far north of Canaan.

13. Honey, in Canaan, formed an important article of food, especially in the wild and semi-arid parts of the land.

14. The Humor of Samson. There is real humor in the story of Samson. It is intentional, and it has the highest purpose. That purpose is, says Dr. Richard G. Moulton, "because the work of Providence at this point is to be accompanied by the agency of laughter. The foe covered with ridicule heartens an Israel that had not only been subdued but cowed into subjection."

"The story of Samson, 'the Sunny,'" remarks Louise Seymour Houghton, "fairly shimmers with humor of the sort in which rude, uncultured people delight. In absence of moral quality Samson, more nearly than any other Old Testament hero, resembles the heroes of pagan epic;

and in many respects he is especially like Hercules, whose twelve labors are somewhat paralleled by the seven exploits of Samson. But with all his untutored spontaneity Samson is never uncouth or vulgar, as Hercules often is. He is a brave spirit in the midst of much disappointment and trial. Merriment seems to be his native element; he loves riddles and puns and practical jokes. Yet he is a patriot all through; and though he accomplished no great deliverance, as did other champions—and this is the tragedy of his too short history—he gave his life for the cause he espoused; and such self-sacrifice ennobles any life."

15. The Lords of the Philistines. The Philistine people occupied the southern part of the coastal plain of Canaan. They had no king, being ruled in peace and led in war by the "lords" of their five principal cities, Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath and Ekron. It has been conjectured that they were originally a refugee colony from the prehistoric kingdom of Crete, which has left us the marvelous remains lately excavated at Knossos.

16. Ancient Sport. Amusement is a universal necessity of life. Where our age organizes its popular amusements commercially, or as an adjunct to education, the Roman world made them a part of its civic life; and in an earlier age, like this of Samson, they were inseparably linked with religion. It seemed quite appropriate to these worshipers of Dagon for the vast assembly to use his temple roof as a grandstand and his sacred court as a stadium. Their worship was part of their life; and their festivals and amusements were not less so.

17. Idolatry in Israel, as this story of Micah shows, was widespread during the earlier centuries. The Bible record often reveals that those who practiced it considered that they were offering acceptable worship to the true God of Israel, though the writer, writing in a later age, condemns them.

18. Phœnician Colonies. This town of Laish, at the foot of Mount Hermon, was evidently a small colony from the Phœnician city of Sidon, or Zidon, on the coast. The Phœnicians were the great seafarers of antiquity and planted their colonies at many points on the Mediterranean shores.

19. Elijah's Mission. It was in the desert that Israel, under Moses, learned the religion of Jehovah. The religion of Canaan, based on nature-worship, was of a very different kind. When King Omri of Israel married his son Ahab to Jezebel, daughter of the priest king of Sidon, she came not only full of zeal for Baal and Ashtoreth, her gods, but evidently convinced that her religion, being the same as that of the Canaanites, was the true and lawful religion of that land, which these Israelite immigrants were in duty bound to follow. In the effort to compel this, King Ahab joined her. The issue thus raised continued to be both a religious and a political question down to the final destruction of Jerusalem nearly three centuries

later. At the outset we see Elijah, the desert prophet, standing for the pure and lofty religion which the tribes of Israel had brought in, with the power of the kingdom against him and nearly the whole nation either agreeing with the queen or afraid to confess Jehovah against her will. But "God and one man are a majority," as has so often since been shown; though the reform could not be finished in the prophet's own day.

20. The Widow's Religion. It is worth noting that this good widow lived in the country of Queen Jezebel and was no doubt herself a worshiper of Baal. It may have been a needed lesson to the zealous prophet that this woman, holding a faith abhorrent to him, could nevertheless show him such unselfish kindness.

21. Mount Carmel. Carmel, "the fruitful," is a mountain ridge, well wooded, whose end forms a cape on the seacoast of Palestine. The locality called Mount Carmel was near the lower end of the ridge and was an ancient "high place," with an altar to Jehovah. From near this point there is a great view of the sea, and the River Kishon, two miles northeast, is reached by a steep trail.

22. The Cloud. The appearance of a little cloud, as here described, is to the weatherwise dweller in the Near East the familiar indication of a coming "Levanter," or fierce easterly wind and storm, such as drove Paul's hapless vessel from Crete to Malta.

23. Juniper, or broom, is a straggly bush of light foliage. It makes a poor shelter against the beating sun and high winds of the desert valleys, but in such places is often the only shade available. The roots when burned make good charcoal for the traveler's camp fire; hence the expression, "coals of juniper."

24. Elijah's Commissions. Like Moses, Elijah was to turn over the completion of his life's labor to his successor. In finding and training Elisha he discharged the third of the three commissions given him; but the first and second were carried out by Elisha many years later.

25. Jezreel was a stronghold on a spur of Mount Gilboa that juts out into the Plain of Esdraelon. Westward it overlooked the plain to the Carmel range; easterly one could look down the Valley of Jezreel to Beth-shan and the distant hills of Gilead; and far to the north, over the hills of Galilee, could be discerned the snowy summit of Mount Hermon. Ahab's father Omri, after building Samaria as his capital, made Jezreel also a royal residence. A chariot road ran up the valley from the Jordan, and another led over the plain to the foot of Mount Carmel.

26. Limited Royal Power. The kings of Israel and Judah were far from absolute monarchs. Public opinion, when expressed by "the heads of fathers' houses," had considerable weight, as Rehoboam in the previous

century had learned by the loss of his northern kingdom. The freedom of brave prophets to utter the word of Jehovah was a further limitation. Even Jezebel, therefore, did not dare to order Naboth slain outright: she proceeded against him under the forms of law.

27. Sons of the Prophets were religious bands who usually lived together, sharing their meager resources and sometimes claiming as their "father" a great prophet like Samuel, Elijah, or Elisha. Their devotions frequently became scenes of wild excitement in which others were moved to join. They represent an early feature of the Hebrew religious life, which evidently led to abuses and was later outgrown.

28. Elijah's Ascent. How mighty must have been the force of Elijah's personality, that only by this majestic parting could it seem possible for his spirit to leave the earth!

The mention of chariots suggests to us simply a mode of transportation. On the hills of Canaan, however, wheeled vehicles were very rare. Chariots therefore suggested to the Hebrews rather a display of magnificence and royal power, or, as here, the favoring presence of Jehovah.

The later glory of Elijah is seen in the use made in Malachi, nearly five centuries later, of his name to describe the messenger whom the Lord would send to purify his degenerate people. No prophet is oftener mentioned in the New Testament. Jesus recognized his spirit in John the Baptist. Even today the Jews who observe the Passover place a chair at the table and leave the door open for Elijah as an expected guest.

29. Harvest at Shunem. The sunstroke that evidently befell the child is easily accounted for. "I know by experience," says Dr. Thomson, "that this valley glows like a furnace in harvest-time." Shunem is in the Plain of Esdraelon, a few miles north of Jezreel; and both places are distant about sixteen miles from the scene of Elijah's sacrifice, where the distracted mother went to seek Elisha.

30. New Moon and Sabbath. This interesting reference to the ancient Hebrew religious times reminds us that the Sabbath was originally the quarter-division of the lunar month. The new moon was the month's beginning, and the first Sabbath of the month was accordingly of special sanctity. The Jewish year was based on the lunar calendar, and we still use it in fixing the date of Easter.

31. Deliverance to Syria. This evidently refers to the great battle of Karkar, fought in 854 B.C. by Shalmaneser III of Assyria, when he made an attack on "the lands of the west," including the kingdoms of Israel and Syria. In his boastful inscription the invader mentions Ahab and Ben-hadad, and claims to have defeated them and levied on them heavy tribute. Naaman probably covered the Syrian retreat, saving the army, and so earned the king's gratitude.

32. The Rivers of Damascus. These clear and copious streams flow down from the snows of Hermon, irrigate and make fruitful and green the gardens and palm groves of this ancient trading city of Damascus, and flowing on into the sandy eastern desert, are lost in an extensive salt marsh. The Jordan, on the contrary, is muddy and useless either for navigation or irrigation, its banks harboring only the wild beasts.

33. The Soil of Israel. Thinking of Jehovah as simply a tribal god having power only on his own soil, Naaman asks for the gift of some of this soil, on which he may hereafter stand and build his altar when he worships Jehovah. It was the work of the great prophets in a later day to teach the universality of Jehovah's reign.

34. The Golden Rule. In this incident we see Elisha, as a true forerunner of Jesus, teaching the law of love. He restrains the king's eagerness for vengeance, reminds him of fair play as due even to war prisoners and much more to these men, and shows him a better and more effective way to master them. The plan works, and there is peace on the border.

35. The Book of Daniel is an apocalypse, a form of prophetic writing marked by intense earnestness, expectation of deliverance for God's saints and judgment on his adversaries, a large use of symbols and visions and specific predictions of future events. The obscurity of the symbols sometimes seems intentional, so that only the true believers may understand. Occasionally names of famous kings and characters are used in place of contemporaries whom it would be dangerous to mention. Apocalyptic writing is found in many parts of the Bible. It usually indicates a time of persecution or distress, when there was no other way for a prophet to give his message to his people. The early Quakers and other persecuted sects of the seventeenth century frequently fell into the apocalyptic style.

36. Chaldean Learning. Within the last seventy-five years vast libraries of this "tongue of the Chaldeans" have been excavated in the remains of the ancient cities of Babylonia and Assyria. The inscriptions are usually made on clay tablets or cylinders, but in some cases are carved on stone. The letters are formed by making wedge-shaped or cuneiform dents in the wet clay. The language used is akin to Hebrew, but the writing is extremely hard to learn and must have given these four young Hebrew students as much trouble as the hardest lessons our students have to master today.

37. Dramatism. In presenting the great spiritual lesson of this remarkable story, the writer dramatically introduces the king as speaker; though a moment later he refers to him in the third person, and afterwards resumes the mode of direct address.

38. The Degradation of Nebuchadnezzar has its literary parallel in Longfellow's story of King Robert of Sicily. King Robert, hearing in

church the anthem sung, "He has put down the mighty from their seat," muttered scornfully, "There is no power can push me from my throne." Then in a vision he saw himself left in the dark church after the service was over, and thrust out forcibly by the sexton, who did not recognize him. Hastening to the throne room, haggard and half-naked, to claim his place, he saw upon the throne another, in likeness to himself, an angel, whom God had put in his stead. After long humiliation and exile he came once again to the court; and when the angel asked him, "Art thou the king?" he answered:

"Thou knowest best:
My sins as scarlet are; let me go hence,
And in some cloister's school of penitence
Walk barefoot, till my guilty soul is shriven."

At this the angel smiled; and the king awoke, to hear the closing cadence of the anthem.

"And when his courtiers came, they found him there,
Kneeling upon the floor, absorb'd in silent prayer."

39. Belshazzar was the son of Nabonidus, king of Babylon, who was more interested in restoring ancient worship than in ruling his kingdom. During the later years of his reign, he left the government largely in the hands of his son. This agrees with the statement of Belshazzar that he would make Daniel the third ruler in the kingdom. The use of "father" in the sense of "predecessor," as applied to Nebuchadnezzar, is a frequent Bible usage.

40. The Writing. The mysterious words, "mene, mene, tekel, upharsin," are here given in three vertical lines, down, up and down, as they were probably written on the wall. Literally, they mean, "numbered, numbered, weighed and divisions." The king could easily read the words; the problem was to explain what God meant by them and to whom they applied. "Peres" is singular, "a division"; "pharsin" is the plural.

41. The Royal Seal. Hundreds of seals such as the king used have been found in Babylonia and Persia. They are in the form of a small cylinder, perforated through the center, with the name cut in opposite form on the round surface. A wire ran through the hole. The owner rolled the seal over the wet clay of the document, thus signing his name.

42. Beth-lehem-judah, so called to distinguish it from a village of the same name of Zebulun, seven miles northwest of Nazareth. As the birthplace of David it is famous throughout the Old Testament.

43. The Farmer's Religion. In every age and land, farming and religion are natural neighbors. Man sees God's hand in the response of nature to his labors; and so at seedtime and harvest, when households combine to plow and sow or to reap and garner together, it is as natural

to worship as to feast, to sing and to make love. In *Lorna Doone* Blackmore pictures the opening of harvest in an Exmoor village in England two centuries ago:

"All the parish was assembled in our upper courtyard; for we were to open the harvest that year. We started in proper order, therefore, as our practice is; first the parson, wearing his gown and cassock, with the parish Bible in his hand, and a sickle strapped behind him. . . . There must have been threescore of us, take one with another; and the lane was full of people. When we were come to the big field gate, where the first sickle was to be, Parson Bowden . . . read some verses from the parish Bible, telling us to lift up our eyes and look upon the fields already white to harvest; and then he laid the Bible down on the square head of the gate-post, and despite his gown and cassock, three good swipes he cut of corn [wheat], and laid them right end onward. . . . And then the clerk gave out a psalm verse by verse. . . . And when the song was sung, so strongly that the foxgloves on the bank were shaking, like a chime of bells, . . . we all fell to at reaping."

44. Gleaners. The poor and the foreigners in Israel haunted the harvest fields and olive groves, timidly picking up handfuls of the grain and fruit missed or dropped by the farmer and his people. Ruth and Naomi, with no harvest of their own, found themselves in this class. In Deuteronomy the householder is enjoined to do as we see Boaz here doing. The little foreigners who gather firewood and other salvage from vacant lots and building operations are doing in our cities what this Moabite stranger did in the fields of Bethlehem.

45. Harvest-time in Palestine varies with the location but ranges in general from the middle of April to the beginning of June. The barley ripens about two weeks earlier than the wheat.

46. The City Gate. Every city in these ancient times was walled for defense; and its gates must be large and capable of sustaining attack. In time of peace the gate, or rather the paved space inside the gate, was the natural forum and meeting place of the citizens, as the well was of the women. In the shade under the overhanging upper story the elders of the city would gather, judges would hold court, and land would be bought and sold. If that kinsman of Ruth was in town, Boaz knew that he would soon pass that way.

47. Ahasuerus. This is the Hebrew form of the Persian name which the Greek historians wrote "Xerxes." This is that Xerxes who with a vast army crossed the Hellespont and invaded Greece, suffering defeat by sea at Salamis and on land at Platæa. The way in which his name is mentioned indicates that his reign represented a far-distant time. He reigned from 484 to 465 B.C.

In order to appreciate this splendidly told story of Esther, therefore, we must put ourselves in the place of a Jew of the later days of Greek rule, when tyranny and oppression had embittered the faithful and aroused not only patriotism but the desire for revenge. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy" was, as Jesus remarked, the characteristic attitude of "them of old time," in the days when this book was written. The vindictiveness of Esther and the Jews, therefore, is part of the truthfulness of the book's picture of Jewish life.

48. Shushan (Susa), the capital of Elam and afterwards of the Medo-Persian empire. It is now in ruins. Notable among these ruins is a great palace, the central hall of which was two hundred feet square. The roof was once supported by thirty-six columns, each sixty feet high. This palace was the scene of the story of Esther. Among the ruins was discovered the famous law code of Hammurabi, who is thought to have been the Amraphel, king of Shinar, or Babylon, in the time of Abraham.

49. Royal Chronicles, as the cuneiform records have abundantly shown, were regularly kept by appointed officials of the Babylonian and Persian kings.

50. "The Agagite." How King Agag of Amalek, executed before the Lord by the prophet Samuel, could have been the ancestor of a Persian noble over five centuries later, seems quite a difficulty till we recall that this noteworthy adversary of the Hebrews was of the race whom Israel was commanded to destroy and hold in enmity forever. He thus became in the course of time a symbol for any hated adversary of the Jews. The reference here, therefore, is probably not genealogical but descriptive, as any Jewish reader would understand.

51. Idolatry, which before the fall of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar had been more or less prevalent among the Jews, was during the exile period thoroughly purged from the nation's heart. During the period of Greek rule following the conquests of Alexander the Great, many of the Jews became lax and conformed to the Greek customs, which were closely associated with the classic mythology and involved recognition of the heathen gods and goddesses. This aroused a new wave of anti-idolatrous feeling among the stricter Jews. Mordecai here carries this feeling to the point where he will not even bow in respect to a heathen official.

52. Lucky Days. These people were great believers in luck and fortune. It would never do to appoint such an enterprise as Haman had in mind until the lots showed a fortunate day. The gods would not else favor it.

53. "Another Place." This noble plea and challenge of Mordecai, with the queen's worthy response, marks the climax of moral feeling in the story. Mordecai's reference to a hope of deliverance "from another

place" is also the nearest approach which this book makes to the mention of God, to whose providence he evidently refers. Perhaps the book was written in a time when the jealous masters of the Jewish province had forbidden mention of Jehovah's name, and the strict author would not use a title that any idolater might think applicable to Zeus or some other heathen divinity.

54. Fasting is nowhere enjoined in the Jewish law as found in the books of Moses, but in the later centuries of Jewish history it became a common religious custom. In Jesus' day it was expected of such a leader by the Pharisees; but, as he reminded them, they had no law but "the traditions of the elders" to appeal to.

55. Esther's Entrance. The noble simplicity of this Biblical story of Esther may be contrasted with the style of the later additions to it that were made in the Greek Bible of the Jews and are now found in the Apocrypha. This scene of Esther's approach to the king is thus described:

"For being majestically adorned, after she had called on the all-seeing God and savior, she took her two maids with her: and upon the one she leaned, as carrying herself delicately; and the other followed, bearing up her train. And she was ruddy through the perfection of her beauty, and her countenance was cheerful and right amiable; but her heart was in anguish for fear. Then having passed through all the doors, she stood before the king, who sat upon his royal throne, and was clothed with all his robes of majesty, all glittering with gold and precious stones; and he was very dreadful. Then lifting up his countenance that was flushed with glory, he looked upon her in fierce anger; and the queen fell down, and turned pale, and fainted, and she bowed herself upon the head of the maid that went before.

"Then God changed the spirit of the king into mildness, who in an agony leaped from his throne, and took her in his arms, till she came to herself again, and comforted her with soothing words, and said to her, 'Esther, what is the matter? I am thy brother, be of good cheer: thou shalt not die, for our commandment is for our subjects: come near.'

"So he held up his golden scepter, and laid it upon her neck, and embraced her, and said, 'Speak to me.'

"Then said she to him, 'I saw thee, my lord, as an angel of God, and my heart was troubled for fear of thy glory. For wonderful art thou, my lord, and thy countenance is full of grace.' And as she was speaking, she fell down for faintness. Then the king was troubled, and all his servants comforted her."

56. Persian Couriers. To the Jews of Jesus' day and the centuries just preceding, the Persian empire represented the ideal world state. Its tyranny and weakness were forgotten; its excellences were idealized and associated with the kindness shown the exiles by Cyrus, its founder.

Among the acts of Darius, who succeeded the son of Cyrus, none was more impressive than his building a system of roads connecting the many provinces of the empire, and establishing a corps of royal couriers, with road stations at regular intervals, for the prompt transmission of edicts and news, especially news of revolts. These couriers were entitled at any hour of day or night to call on a householder to go with them or furnish a guide for a limited distance on their journey. This explains the reference of Jesus, "Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain."

57. Purim, a feast of patriotic rejoicing, still kept by orthodox Jews with great fervor. It comes in February or early March, according to the lunar year. The Book of Esther is regularly read in the synagogue as part of the observance of the day; and when the reader reaches the name of Haman, the boys are allowed to make loud noises. After the service, gifts are exchanged, with greetings and festivities of the holiday season.

58. Jonah, the son of Amittai, was a prophet of the kingdom of Israel, of the age of the great prophets Amos and Hosea. He predicted the victories of Jeroboam II, by which that king for a time regained the dominions of David.

Reading the Book of Jonah, we see at once that it is a story told about this prophet and how he fought against the lovingkindness of God. The writer evidently desires to rebuke the hard and bitter spirit of some Jews against those foreign peoples who have oppressed them and made them suffer, as the kings of Nineveh did to Israel in the days represented by Jonah. He presents this old prophet as the spokesman of this spirit, giving us what Jonah did and said, and how God met and answered him.

Dr. Cornill, the learned German scholar, once said, "I have read this little book"—in the original, of course—"at least a hundred times; and I cannot yet read it without tears." It has been called the most powerful appeal for foreign missions in the Bible.

59. The Maccabean Persecutions. This story is taken from II Maccabees in the Apocrypha. The persecution thus vividly described is referred to in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The date of this persecution was from 168 to 165 B.C. Of the two books of Maccabees which describe it, the first is carefully historical. The second shows strong feeling and a tendency to enlarge and embellish details.

HEROES OF LATER ISRAEL

60. Cyrus, founder of the Persian Empire, was an enlightened and merciful monarch. At first a petty ruler in Elam, north of the Persian Gulf, he became king of Persia, conquered the king of the Medes and so became master of the Median Empire. Continuing his conquests, he finally in 538 B.C. took Babylon, as the story of Belshazzar has told us. He reigned

nine years. His policy was to treat his subject peoples kindly and support their religions. As a Persian, Cyrus was probably a follower of Zoroaster, the religious reformer, whose religion in many ways resembled that of the Hebrews.

61. Sheshbazzar, governor of the small colony of returning Jewish exiles, has been thought to be the son of Jehoiachin, the exiled king of Judah, whom the king of Babylon some years before had released from prison and treated with respect, as the Bible historian relates. It was part of the wise and considerate policy of Cyrus thus to let each colony be led by its own native leader, as long as it showed no signs of revolt. Zerubbabel, who is also mentioned as leader, was on this theory the nephew of Sheshbazzar and soon succeeded him.

62. The Builders. When the captives were taken from Jerusalem, a large part of the population was left in the land; and before the decree of Cyrus many who had fled to Egypt and elsewhere had returned. These inhabitants, though poor and discouraged, had multiplied, and established their homes. We must not suppose, therefore, that the altar was raised and the temple later built by the returned Babylonian exiles alone.

63. The Threefold Organization. Just as in the American Constitution the three elements of the executive, the legislative and the judicial power are found, each balancing and supporting the other, so in the Hebrew and Jewish state there were three powers, the king, the priest and the prophet, each supplying a needed element in the life of the people.

64. Darius. After Cambyses, the cruel and unworthy son of the great Cyrus, there were several pretenders to the Persian throne. Power, however, was soon seized by Darius, a general of the army. The first year or two of his reign was a stormy time, with revolts breaking out in many parts of the empire. It looks as if both Haggai and Zechariah had their eye on Zerubbabel, and hoped that with the break-up of the empire God might enable the Jews to set him on the throne and make Judah a kingdom again. But soon the great king had his realm under control, and all hopes of independence vanished.

65. The Second Temple. The completion of this successor to the great temple built by Solomon in his time of peace and prosperity was a remarkable achievement for these impoverished people. It was poor and small in comparison with the first temple, but it had a wonderful history. For five centuries it was the religious home of the Jewish people. They built other temples, one, whose records have recently been unearthed, on the island of Elephantine far up the Nile; but the temple at Jerusalem was always the center of the faith. Here the books of Psalms in five collections were gathered and sung. When King Herod, a few years before the birth of Christ, wished to rebuild it in great magnificence, the Jews would not let him touch a stone until all the materials for the new temple were ready

and on hand. Then an army of priests who had learned the mason's trade reverently took down Zerubbabel's old building and erected the temple that Jesus knew.

66. The Crowns. Knowing the political situation in the Persian Empire at this time and the jealousy of later kings against any indication of desire for national independence, many scholars think that Zechariah originally wrote this passage with the idea that one crown was to be for Zerubbabel as king and the other for Joshua as high priest.

67. The Embassy. This visit was no doubt undertaken by these faithful Jews in the hope that Hanani's brother, of whose greatness at the royal court they had heard, might be prevailed on to come and do something for the Jerusalem colony and its religion. They represented the pious party, the "jewels" of whom Malachi has been speaking.

68. The Cupbearer. As the story of Joseph also indicates, the royal cupbearer, there called the butler, is an important personage at the court and must be one on whose faithfulness the king can fully rely. Otherwise, conspirators might bribe him to put poison in the cup. The king, idolater as he was, was glad to make use of a man like Nehemiah, whose religion made him trustworthy and dependable.

69. Sadness in the presence of royalty is always against court rules. Whatever happens, life must be bright and cheerful. This king was an absolute and a capricious monarch; and there were waiting, no doubt, many malicious enemies who would gladly help on any tendency on the king's part to get rid of this Jewish favorite. No wonder the cupbearer feared when he realized that he had given way to his emotion. But he determined to press his case notwithstanding.

70. The Queen. This was probably Amestris, the queen mother, who, as we know from Greek history, exercised a great influence over her son.

71. The Walls. Statesman that he was, Nehemiah saw at a glance what he had evidently thought of before, that the weakness and poverty and also the religious degeneracy of the colony sprang first of all from the fact that they were at the mercy of their jealous and greedy neighbors. A defensible wall around the city would help not only its inhabitants but the villagers also. And until they had a wall entirely built, with every breach closed, they would have no wall at all. The local rulers had been utterly unequal to the task of organizing such a work.

72. Nehemiah's Adversaries. Sanballat was evidently the leader of the mixed Jewish population of Samaria, whose descendants, the Samaritans, were so bitterly hated by the Jews. He came, as it appears, from Beth-horon, Joshua's old battlefield. Tobiah represented the people of Ammon from the eastern hills, who were now pressing in from their

borderland home as the Israelites had done centuries before. Geshem led the Bedouins of the desert from still farther east and south. They were the successors to the Midianites of Gideon's day. All were profiting by Judah's weakness and were determined to keep Jerusalem in their power.

Besides all that these enemies could themselves do, Nehemiah knew well that they had no doubt already dispatched their messenger to the distant king with a lying story of his revolutionary doings and would ere-long appear with a royal injunction. He had, therefore, only a short time in which to finish the walls.

73. "To the Half." In other words, by organizing a large number of parties, setting each to build that part in which it was most interested, keeping the work steadily going despite all interference and pressing each day's work to the limit of daylight, the governor now had a half-wall all round the city and could defend it against a surprise attack.

74. The Villagers' Cry. The contingents from the villages near the Samaritan and the Ammonite borders demanded that they be allowed to stay at home and protect their families. Nehemiah saw that such temporary safety would result in no city wall, and that would leave the whole land in danger. So he paid no attention to this selfish complaint.

75. Moral Influence of the Wall. Here we begin to see the moral and religious as well as the military advantage of walls to the city. By his control of the gates the governor could enforce the law of the Sabbath and other reforms. It was now possible to attack the abuses which had been pointed out by Malachi. The wall was also a bid for the return of exiles from Babylon, Egypt and elsewhere: they could now hope that they and their children would be safe from the raids of the invaders. The whole future history of the province, in fact, rested on the completion of that wall around Jerusalem.

76. The Anti-samaritan Viewpoint. When this narrative of Ezra was written, the feud between Jews and Samaritans was active and bitter. The author seems to fear lest the Samaritans may get some credit for the building of the temple and the reformation of the worship; so he makes sure of excluding them by telling only of what Ezra and other visitors from the East did in Jerusalem.

77. "The Book of the Law." This was probably the Book of Deuteronomy, found in the temple by Hilkiah the priest and brought to King Josiah about thirty-five years before the final fall of the Jewish kingdom. We can easily imagine how strong an appeal its eloquent calls to a purer worship and more faithful following of the Lord must have made to the listening audience.

78. Giving the Sense. During the exile period the Jews abandoned the use of Hebrew and adopted Aramaic. In Jesus' day Aramaic was the

native tongue of the Jewish people. The author here evidently means that as Ezra read in Hebrew, the Levites, stationed among the throng, interpreted the words to the people.

79. The Law Codified. Many laws and precedents from the times of Moses and later rulers had been preserved by the Jews. During the centuries which followed the destruction of Solomon's temple, these were carefully compiled and united with the historical records of the patriarchs and the wilderness journeys. Perhaps by the time of Ezra, certainly before the days of Alexander the Great, this work was completed; for the Samaritans, who at that time seceded from Jerusalem and built their own temple on Mount Gerizim, took with them the first five books of our Bible and have kept them pure to this very day.

80. "Lawless Men"; that is, men who did not follow the law of Moses. By their heathen ways these men made the place ceremonially unclean. So Peter at Pentecost told the Jews that they had crucified Christ "by the hand of lawless men"; meaning Pilate and the Roman soldiers. The place thus fortified and polluted by a Gentile garrison was the old citadel of Jerusalem overlooking the sacred temple area.

81. The Final Issue. This life-and-death challenge had been long foreshadowed. The distinction between the strict and the liberal Jews can be found in Malachi and in the reforms of Nehemiah and Ezra. When the Greek rule came in, this distinction became sharper. The Greek culture, with its love of beauty, its fondness for "graven images" in marble and bronze, its athletic exercises and care of the body, its poetry and philosophy, its religion of gods and goddesses, and its low standards of morality, appealed to young Jews of the more prosperous families, including some of the priests; and they began to stand "in the way of sinners" and sit "in the seat of the scornful." Against them were arrayed "the pious ones," whose delight was "in the law of the Lord" and who sternly turned their backs on Greek fashions as idolatry and sin. To the liberal this seemed narrowness; but to that narrowness the world owes our priceless heritage of Old Testament morality and liberty and the preparation for the coming of the Messiah. The time had now come to see who would be faithful to the death.

82. The Outlaw Band. The brave old priest, with his five stalwart sons and their loyal comrades, had in their favor not only the ruggedness and wildness of the Judean hills, with their many limestone caves and secret fastnesses, but the comfort of following in the footsteps of David, their national hero. He too had been driven unjustly to seek refuge in those very wilds.

83. Hasideans, the strict Jewish party, "the holy ones," who later were represented by the Pharisees.

84. The Rising Revolt. The land of Judea is well fitted to shelter a band of outlaws such as the brave priest and his sons were now gathering. It is full of wild glens and desert regions where desperate men can hide and from which they can make sudden raids. So David had found centuries

DEATH OF ANTIOCHUS

From a drawing by Gustave Dorê

before. When the band had swelled to an army, the land was also capable of defense against a foreign foe, who could reach the heights only through narrow valleys where the defenders had a great advantage.

85. Lysias. To refill his treasury with plunder, Antiochus IV went to Persia, leaving the kingdom and his young son to the care of Lysias, a relative. On this expedition the king died, and the son succeeded as Antiochus V, reigning two years. The author of II Maccabees tells with exultation of the old tyrant's rage on hearing of Nicanor's death and the rout of Timotheus' forces in Gilead, and describes how, hurrying back to wreak vengeance, he fell from his chariot and soon after expired in great agony.

86. Lysias Retreats. This savage onslaught, combined with the difficulty of maintaining an army on the waterless hills of Judah, moved Lysias to withdraw to Antioch until he could make larger preparation for victory. This gave Judas the breathing spell needed for the rededication of the temple.

87. The Great Deliverance. Judas is referring to the destruction, on the border of Egypt, of the vast army of Sennacherib, whose "rab-shakeh" or ambassador, with a force of Assyrian soldiers, had insolently demanded of King Hezekiah entrance into Jerusalem, threatening the king's wrath if the demand was not granted. The prophet Isaiah told Hezekiah to stand firm and God would deliver the city.

88. The Roman Republic. This glowing picture of the then rapidly rising power of Rome leaves out many dark features, as students of Roman history well know. But it does remind us that the Romans were idealists and that their conceptions of civil liberty, equal justice and world peace brought in many blessings. Their rule, hard as it was, was a great improvement on the lawless tyranny of the Syrian power.

89. Demetrius I succeeded Antiochus V as king of Syria. Constant quarrels for over twenty years between rival claimants for the Syrian throne were skilfully used by the Jewish leaders in advancing their progress toward full independence.

90. Dark Days. Deserted by all but a handful of followers, yet seeing more clearly than ever the need of continuing the struggle if freedom were to be won, the noble Jewish hero reminds us of Washington on his retreat through New Jersey in the fall of 1776, when the masterly strategy at Trenton and the courage shown at Princeton enabled the commander to turn the tide and gain a chance for victory once more.

91. The Citadel Cleansed. This final capture of the great fortress overlooking the temple, which for twenty-two years since the temple-cleaning by Judas had continued to menace the worshipers and pollute the city with heathenism, took place in 142 B.C. and marked the final achievement of Jewish independence.

92. The Maccabean Succession. John, the third son of Simon, was enabled by a timely warning to save his life; and he ruled over the Jews for more than thirty years. After him came a succession of worldly leaders, many of them personally most corrupt. Leadership of the people was divided between two parties: the Sadducees or sons of Zadok, to whom the Maccabean rulers usually belonged, with the high priest and the wealthy class at Jerusalem; and the Pharisees, loyal to the ideals of Ezra. The Maccabeans, sometimes called the Hasmoneans, were in power from 167 B.C., the date of the old priest's revolt, until Pompey, the Roman general, took Jerusalem in 63 B.C., though he allowed them to hold the throne until 40 B.C. At that time Herod, called the Great, was appointed king of Judea by the Roman senate. He strengthened his position by marrying Mariamne, a descendant of the Hasmonean family. Herod died a few months after Christ was born. So the influence of this great family persisted down to the beginning of the Christian era.

SCENES FROM HEBREW LIFE

93. "Plague Boils." We learn from the narrative that this mysterious Ark was carried as a trophy to Ashdod, a city on the much-traveled coast road from the East to Egypt; that among the crowds that must have thronged to see it a deadly plague broke out; that this plague was characterized by boils and swellings; that in connection with this there was also a plague of mice in the land, which the Philistine priests associated with the disease; that the infection seemed to travel with the Ark from city to city; and that when at last the Hebrews of Beth-shemesh received the Ark, they sacrificed the cows that drew the cart, and were themselves soon after attacked by the plague.

It is interesting to note that every element in this description suggests what we know today as the bubonic plague, which has often broken out in that region, and which is spread by the bite of fleas carried in the fur of rats and other animals.

94. Votive Images. Visitors to the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes in France, or of Ste. Anne de Beaupré in Quebec, or similar shrines of pilgrimage, will note the interesting parallel between these golden images prepared by the Philistines as an offering to Jehovah and the crutches, ship models, and other reminders of trouble and deliverance which the faithful have left at these shrines, in gratitude for blessings there received.

The judgment of the Philistine priests that the Hebrew God would not receive back his Ark and stay the plague without an offering represents the universal thought of the ancient worshiper. Some scholars find this in the Third Commandment, which they translate, "Thou shalt not take up the name of Jehovah thy God for emptiness," that is, without an offering to show the sincerity of the worshiper's prayer.

THE MACCABEES

The following genealogical table, with its brief comments, will serve to place in the reader's mind each of the members of that remarkable family that was so influential through the Greek and even into the Roman period of Jewish history.

MATTATHIAS
The aged Jewish priest who started the revolt against Antiochus IV of Syria, 167 B.C.

- **JOHN**
- **SIMON**
  Who achieved independence and was made hereditary ruler, 143–135 B.C.
  - **JUDAS**
  - **MATTATHIAS**
  - **JOHN HYRCANUS**
    Succeeded Simon and extended the kingdom, 135–105 B.C.
    - **ARISTOBULUS**
      Unscrupulous. Took the title of king, 105–104 B.C.
    - **ANTIGONUS**
    - **ALEXANDER JANNEUS**
      Worse than his brother. Opposed the patriotic Pharisees, 104–78 B.C. Succeeded by his wife, ALEXANDRA, who was ruled by the Pharisees, 78–69 B.C.
      - **HYRCANUS II**
        A weakling. Sometimes high priest and sometimes king, 78–40 B.C.
      - **ARISTOBULUS II**
        Dominated his brother but was subdued by Pompey, who made Judea a Roman province, 69–63 B.C.
        - **ALEXANDER**
          Failed to regain the throne in 57 B.C.
          - **MARIAMNE**
            Married Herod the Great, who murdered her and her sons ALEXANDER and ARISTOBULUS, the last of the line.
        - **ANTIGONUS**
          Regained the throne, 40–37 B.C., but was overthrown and killed by Herod the Great.
- **JUDAS**
  The victorious captain who restored the temple worship, 166–161 B.C.
- **ELEAZAR**
- **JONATHAN**
  The wise politician who succeeded Judas, 161–143 B.C.
- **DAUGHTER**

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